1: Warner
● 773

OI 17 Murngin OI17

[For a collection of Murngin myths, see pp. 519-65, category 116.]

771 a number of totems which are grouped into hierarchies of sacred values. Several fundamental myths organize the conceptual scheme of the social life and of the outside world which surrounds it. Elaborate community rituals allow the individual by means of symbolic dances, songs, and ritual speech to participate physically in the expression of the group's conceptions of the absolute.

773 The primary purpose of the several chapters on myth and ritual in this book is to attempt to solve the problem of the social meanings of the symbols used in these oral and dramatic rites. The major mythologies are creation stories which tell of the lives of two sisters who lived in the days when the world was different and man and beast had an existence usually the exact opposite of their manner of life today. The dramatic episodes in the journey of these creator women from the unknown interior to the coastal plains are saturated with social meaning and social value. Within them are the ultimate clues to the problem of Murngin social logic.

121 Generally speaking, it will be the purpose of this book, not only to present the civilization of the Murngin in the description of the various parts of tribal life, but to attempt to discover some of the general principles which govern their social life. To do this we shall examine, particularly in the chapter on technology, their primary adaptation to their natural environment. We shall see what complete technological systems have been organized by them to make and manipulate their tools and implements and adjust themselves as men to the ordered cycle of nature with its rainy season of scarcity and its dry season of plenty. We shall then, in the chapters on local organization, kinship, age grading, and warfare, look at their social order and determine how they regulate the human relations, not only of individual to individual, but of smaller groups to larger groups, of family to clan, and clan to tribe. Finally, we shall present the Murngin religious life and see what it means and how it regulates, organizes, and integrates their behavior into that of a complete and well-organized society.

To be more technical, when we have completed our study we shall have seen the primary articulation of Murngin society with its natural environment by the agency of its technology; secondly, we shall have examined the secondary adaptation of the several tribes by which their social organization disciplines and organizes the human behavior of the individuals of the culture and their relations with one another as members of the several internal institutions of the tribe; and, finally, we shall have viewed the tertiary adaptation of the people,

105 throughout the eight tribes. The horde, dealt with in the chapter on
technology, and the phratry may or may not be present in a given
area. The tribe is of minor importance in native life.

THE CLAN

614 The Murngin clan is an exogamic patrilineal group averaging forty
or fifty individuals who possess a common territory which averages
423 360 square miles.[5] This group possesses one or more sacred totemic
178 water holes, formed by a creator totem, in which the whole of the
tribal life is focussed; all members of the clan are born from this
water hole, and all go back to it at death; in it the totem's spirits live
with the mythological ancestor, the souls of the dead, and the unborn
children. The male members of the clan who can be the permanent
occupants of the group's land possess totemic emblems in common.

614 A clan frequently has an exclusive name for its people and another
[197] preferred one that defines the language spoken by this people as different from that of all other clans. The clan is exogamous by virtue
[582] of belonging to a moiety, which prevents marriage within its half
of the tribe. Theoretically an individual can marry into any one of the
clans in the opposite moiety. The tribal and intertribal myths of the
● 173 moiety which are saturated with themes expressing the local organiza-
614 tion of these people always devote small parts of their stories to the
special circumstances of the creation of a clan. They also give its association with the totems and other elements of tribal life considered
important by these people. The more localized myths which concern
only two or three clans usually symbolize intra-clan solidarity and
inter-clan antagonism. The ceremonies possessed by a clan, like the
[184] totems, are ordinarily owned by other similar groups belonging to
the same moiety, although local variations in totem and ceremony
occur.

614 The following relatives are always found in a clan: marikmo[6]
(father's father and father's father's sister), bapa (father), mokul bapa
(father's sister), wawa (older brother), yukiyuko (younger brother),
yeppa (sister), gatu (son and daughter), and maraitcha (son's son and
son's daughter). In other words, these relatives are in ego's brother's

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[5] For additional elements in the clan configuration see Part III.

[6] See Chart II, page 59, for the place of kinship terms in the kinship system. Native terms have been used more frequently than the author would have liked, but it was impossible always to give an exact translation in a few words. It seems better to define a word carefully at least once, and thereafter use the term. (See Glossary of Native Terms.)

614 423 writer recorded statements from some younger men that certain territory belonged to the people now living upon it, while a few old men said this land really belonged to an older group that had died out. Once these old men are dead, it is likely that all memory of the ownership by a former clan will be gone.

614 423 312 Clan territory always has as a central core the land surrounding the water hole. Near the water hole the camps are usually made. Unless a river, lake, or other body of water defines it, no exact boundary exists between two clans. Usually a river or lake is occupied by one clan and the barren plains between form the outer limits for it and its neighbors. When one traverses a dry, unproductive part of the country, those parts of it near billibong (Australian white term: small lake or pool), lily places, and water locations are known to all peoples to belong to a definite clan; but as one moves across the dry plains toward the water hole of another group, there is considerable doubt as to which clan owns the plains area. No native would bother himself about it; it is looked upon as without significance in the lives of the people.

614 423 The land along the sea, the bays, inlets and tidal rivers, however, has very definite boundaries, well known to all peoples. Usually myths or folk tales record the facts of territorial ownership in the tribal tradition. The land of the clan is not always contiguous but may be separated by a distance of twenty or thirty miles. The home of a clan, however, is usually one continuous tract. The Gwiyamil, situated in the interior on Buckingham River, possess a small island in Caddell Straits between Elcho and Howard Islands. The island, piled high with boulders and with one wind-blown tree, cannot be more than 200 feet in diameter. Its natural geographic affinities are with Elcho Island, but it is "owned" by this inland clan. The Murngin say that Garrawark,
● [173] a creator totemic fish, dived underground from the Gwiyamil well in the interior and came up at this island, made it, and called it Gwiyamil country. Garrawark also made other clan countries, but he did not call them Gwiyamil, which exposes the rationalization in this answer. A guess, based on similar types of association among the Murngin, is that some peculiarity in the country and the island associated the two places in their minds. The Milyingi, Djirin, Warumeri, Marungun and other clans all have additional territory away from their clan home and water holes. 423

614 173 727 No land can be taken from a clan by an act of war. A clan does not possess its land by strength of arms but by immemorial tradition

and as an integral part of the culture. Murngin myth dies hard, and 423
ownership of land is in Murngin myth even after the final destruction 614
of a particular clan. It would never occur to a victorious group to 773
annex another's territory, even though the entire male population were 727
destroyed and the dead men's women and children taken by the victors. In the passage of time the clan using it would absorb it into their own territory and the myth would unconsciously change to express this. In the thought of the Murngin, land and water, people and clan are an act of the creator totem and the mythological ancestors, who always announce in myth and ceremony that this is the country of such and such a clan; to expropriate this land as a conscious act would be impossible. Just as the totem, the creator, and the members are a permanent and inextricable part of the culture, so is the clan's ownership of the land. This will become clearer when the concepts of birth, death, and totem are associated, and the sacred wells of the clans considered.

The forty or fifty-odd people who belong to a clan do not all live 614
in the land of the clan. All sisters and daughters, since the rule of marriage is patrilocal after the first year or two, go to their husband's clan 591
to live and rear their families. This means that fully half of the members of the clan live after the age of puberty with a group belonging to the opposite moiety. On the other hand, the wives of the clansmen have come from clans of the opposite moiety and make up the difference in population caused by the loss of the group's own females.

Friendly clans always live together during the seasons when food is 614
plentiful in certain area. When the turtles of Buckingham Bay are 423
laying hundreds of eggs nightly along the Djirin coast, the Birkili
and Wangurri may be found there. When the cycad palm nuts are 221
ready for picking on Millingimbi Island, the surrounding clans gather for the period of plenty. This is done as a right, no invitation being necessary and no one questioning this right as long as peace reigns. Let there be trouble and cause for a possible killing, and the visitors return to their own land, even though their visit has taken on the nature of a permanent residence.

The most important unifying concept in the whole of clan ideology 778
is that of the sacred water hole in which reposes the spiritual unity of 614
clan life. It is the fundamental symbol of clan solidarity. From it come all the eternal qualities, and to it those qualities return when they have been lived or used by members of the clan. Water, in Murngin thought, is one of the most important symbols of spiritual life.

583 as husband and wife. They have been copulating before, frequently
[836] with the knowledge of the father and mother, but the latter pretend ignorance.

Usually an older man with a wife or two acquires a young woman in her adolescent period. A young girl often starts living in her hus-
[591] band's household before menstruation. The dué usually takes her for fear of having her stolen from her parents by some other dué. He has no intercourse with her during this period. When the girl is old
833 enough he may without ceremony start actual intercourse. Or he may take her out into the bush on the ruse that they are going fishing. He asks her to get some drinking water or some wood. While she is gone he ties a small piece of opossum fur string around his index finger, and when she comes back he asks her to lie down. He places the finger inside her vagina; then they return to camp, and sexual intercourse starts. This minor ceremony is not frequently practiced.

841 When an older man takes a pre-adolescent girl he helps the mother perform the ceremony at her first menstruation. After this is over the
[302] husband paints her with red ochre (this is always done for mourners after the death of a relative to avoid ceremonial uncleanliness, and is used in ceremonies).

841 Ordinarily there is but little taboo on a menstruating woman. She sleeps in the same house or camp with her husband, though the couple
773 do not copulate. The only restriction in daily life is that no man would allow a wife or any other woman to go out in a canoe with him during this period, for otherwise the great mythical snake, Bapa Indi (the Great Father), would swallow them all. The story is told that not so long ago a man took his two wives in a canoe for a trip from one island to another. One of them was menstruating. When they had gone for a short time Yurlunggur (Bapa Indi) smelt the unclean odor, came out of the subterranean depths, and swallowed them all. This modern folk tale, which is believed by all Murngin, fits into the tribe's most fundamental myth of the two old creator sisters.

582 The above describes how a man ordinarily obtains a wife and what usually happens; but often a woman is not taken from her parents for some time because her future husband may be away in the country of a more distant clan. Various men may also dispute the right to her, owing to a gawel's exceeding his rights by promising her to several men, or because of a wrong marriage of the mokul or gawel, with the true gurrong of mokul demanding the daughter and the true waku of gawel claiming her. If the marriage had been according to

core of the whole structure functioning at one time. Starting from 582 the lower left-hand corner, kutara is seen making gifts to ego's waku 601 for his daughters; waku is sending gifts to ego (waku's gawel) for his daughters; ego is performing the same exchange with gawel, while the latter is in a similar position with ego's mari. Thus we see running diagonally throughout the entire kinship system. the reciprocation based on the exchange of daughters and compensated for it by gifts, while at the same time new families are being created by the change of the daughter and sister of the older family into the wife and mother of the newly created family (see Chart II).

This same small pattern of behavior (mother's brother ⟷ sister's son) creates other diagonal lines, the two most important of which are the line dumungur ⟷ gurrong ⟷ dué ⟷ bapa ⟷ nati; and the line, kaminyer ⟷ gatu ⟷ galle ⟷ marelker ⟷ natji walker. These lines are also exchanging women for presents, as ego's own line does. To see this clearly, let the reader consider bapa (father) in Chart II as ego, and it will be seen that from dumungur to nati there are people in the same relationship as kutara to mari.

There is always the danger that this reciprocity will be broken; that gawel will allow his daughter to go to another relative than waku; that a series of runaway marriages, wrong marriages, or wife-stealing will break these lateral and diagonal bonds, thereby breaking the relationship system.

Further, the organized antagonism felt by the family whose unity is injured by the removal of a marrying member may result in open [578] onflict that would involve the larger interclan unities, destroying the ocial structure since its whole basis is the kinship organization.[10]

Custom of the Mir-ri-ri

To discover additional methods for saving the structure from destruction because of asocial actions and to get at the real meaning of 593 ome customs that heretofore have appeared inexplicable, let us re-

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[10] This organized antagonism which exists between gawel and waku and their espective families is brought out clearly in the myth commonly told of Jabiru and mu (see Appendix VIII). The attitude of strong solidarity of the daughter toward her ather should be noticed; the criteria she applies to her husband in his relations with er father are the normal Murngin ones. The telling of this myth always causes much ornful laughter. The events of the first part of the story might easily happen, but the pen fighting would not occur. The whole myth gives a series of explanations of how nimals took their present form, and it also symbolically expresses the antagonisms ad standards that apply for son-in-law and father-in-law. [173]

628 789 their men into two groups; one side goes to the left of the camp of the image and the other to the right. They form a circle of spearmen about the camp. When the advancing leaders have met and the camp is completely surrounded, they ask if the "killer" is there, and use his name; and then, with shouts and cries, the expedition rushes in and throws its spears into the body of the image.

The above follows very closely the usual maringo fight of the blacks. If the expedition is successful the killer's body takes the place of the image, and possibly several of his relatives are also slain.

After the spears have been thrown into the image, the owner of the relic kneels on both knees beside it. He puts a piece of fire that has been taken from the camp fire into the image. He places his basket before his mouth; in the basket he has the relic, wrapped up in fiber string or paper bark, so that no profane eye can see it. He addresses the relic as follows: "Where is the killer?" There is no answer. He then starts naming the various possible places where the slayer could be found and asks the relic, which has the spirit of the dead man, where the enemy is. The naming of place is continued until a kind of click is heard. This is supposed to come from the bone and is in answer to the question.

The owner of the relic says, "Ah, that is the place." He once more addresses the relic: "You are not lying to me? You are telling me the truth?" The click is heard again. Next day the avenging expedition sets out and goes to the place designated to kill the slayer of their relative. It is thought that such an expedition must be successful after the ritual has been performed.

773 The best description of a maringo can be found in the following myth from the Durili people of Cape Grey, which tells of a night attack made by the snakes against a certain clan. It conforms to the accounts of the modern maringo fighting and in addition gives the idealized form according to the best native standards.

"The people were catching fish in the creek. They had caught a lot of fish with a line [for hooks the Murngin used nails from planks that were brought in on the tide]. While some of the men were catching fish others were busy making a fire. They burned the bones and scales in the fire. An eastern wind came up.

"A small blue-tongued lizard [Dua moiety] who was in the nearby bush smelt the fish bones cooking. 'Ah,' he said, 'they are cooking fish; I shall go.'

"He came close; he ate the bones and scales. The men got up. 'What is this?' they said. They had never seen a blue-tongued lizard before, for although he looked like a snake he was different. Someone picked up a stick and hit this lizard on the head and killed it.

"Far back in the jungle the lizard's father waited for him. He was poisonous and very vicious. He was a barananna and wongar.

"Presently the soul of the little blue-tongued lizard entered the heart of his father. The father trembled as it did this and realized what had happened. 'Someone has killed my son,' he said. He was very angry.

"The father sent word to all the snakes and lizards. They all came. He was far down in his well. They all went into his well. The father snake lifted the stone which was at the bottom of the well and made it much larger. They all came out of the well, the snakes first and the lizards after. They made three groups and formed three rings. The head man moved his body and the earth shook.

"The men who had killed the blue-tongued lizard said, 'What is the matter with this ground? It is moving.' The father snake came out of the well and sent two of his sons to look at the enemy. When they returned the father and his two sons led the three groups. The parent snake came behind the whole army.

"They walked until they were close to the camp. When but a short distance away the snakes sharpened their teeth to prepare for the battle.

"The two sons said, 'You stay here. We will go look to see how many men there are.' They looked. 'Good,' they said, 'all of them are here.'

"Then every snake painted himself with white paint while the sons were away. The two came back and went to their father.

" 'What did you find?'

" 'Nothing,' they said, 'no one was there, only tracks.'

"They lied.

"The father said, 'Why did we come here for nothing?' He was very angry. The two sons borrowed pieces of white clay and threw them into the center of the ring of warriors. The father said, 'Ah, that is good. There are plenty of them there. We will go now.' It is like we Murngin do now when we go to fight. We send men to look at the camp. When they come back they say, 'Nobody is there,' but then they throw white paint in the ring, which means that there are a number, that we can fight them. We do that today because Wongar did that and because everybody knows, that means we will fight.

All the larger snakes as they advanced walked on their tails like men, and they stood very high. Meanwhile the clansmen had taken refuge on a small island in the creek because they were afraid of the earthquake and they did not know what was going to happen. The snakes arrived at the old camp and followed the men's footprints to the island.

"The Wongar snake said, 'We will sleep here on the bank until early

● 773 morning, then we will surround the camp while they sleep and kill them all.'

"The morning star came out. The father saw it and he said, 'We will show these people now that they cannot kill our sons.'

"The clansmen heard the noise of the snakes swimming in the river. They thought it the sound of a tide. The men were in the center of the island. The snakes surrounded them in the following formation:[1]

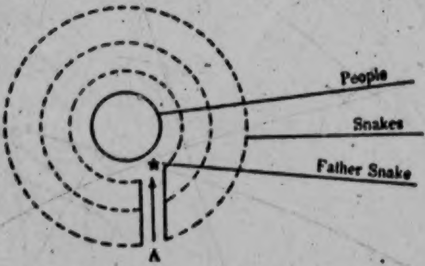

FIGURE 1.—THE MARINGO TYPE OF BATTLE FORMATION

"The father snake went in the aisle at A, just as the leader does now. They killed all the men and left them. One man escaped by climbing up a mangrove tree where the snakes did not see him.

"When the snakes went back to their own country that man came down. He went to his own clan and recruited a number of men to come fight the snakes. The Wongar snake hit them with several thunderbolts and defeated them."[2]

Milwerangel

726 The Milwerangel is a general fight between members of several clans. The element of surprise is not used. The participants know it will take place at a certain location, usually an open plain with jungle growths bordering it. After a few minutes of fighting, the combat resembles a brawl. Spears and clubs are used, but the latter play only a minor rôle. An excellent concrete example of a milwerangel will be found in the account of the feud described later in this chapter. Further generalization is unnecessary except to say that the milwerangel is a recognized type of battle and therefore has a specific name.

Gaingar

The gaingar is so deadly and results in so many casualties that it is rarely used and then only under the most extreme provocation. There

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[1] This diagram is a copy of one made by a native informant.

[2] Certain elements of the myth which have nothing to do with a maringo fight have been omitted.

CHAPTER IX

MURNGIN TOTEMISM, I

796 773 MURNGIN totemism consists of a ritual relation which is established between members of the clans and certain species of plants and animals. This relationship is expressed in certain myths and rituals.

There are two general types of rituals, one of which is called the Wawilak Myth Cycle in this book, and the other, the Djunkgao Myth Cycle. The Wawilak Cycle includes four fundamental ceremonies, the Djungguan, Gunabibi, Ulmark, and Marndiella. (The Liaalaomir and certain Dua clan ceremonies and certain garma rituals will be treated separately, although they too seem to be related to the fundamental Wawilak myth.) The Djunkgao rituals in Murngin thought form a separate myth-ritual constellation with another fundamental myth—the Djunkgao Sisters myth—and comprise two major ceremonies, the Dua Narra and the Yiritja Narra. Other important but less elaborated myth and ritual groupings will also be tested by the method we propose following in this examination of Murngin ritual and myth.

The Wawilak Myth Cycle of ceremonies—very elaborate and usually extending over several months—is focused around the *rites de passage* of the individual.[1] The Narra ceremonies of the Djunkgao Myth Cycle are also long and elaborate but are pointed more directly toward totemic behavior as it centers around the totemic well.

Both the Wawilak and Djunkgao myth-ritual cycles are concerned primarily with the expression of the social logics (usually illogical thinking, if observed as the mental behavior of an individual) of the people as they are focused on the problem of adapting nature to man. The data demonstrating this thesis will be presented in this and the following two chapters.

121 The totemic religious behavior of the Murngin tribes is intelligible only in terms of the social organization, the relation of the technological system to society generally, and the ideas which surround the so-

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[1] See Chapter IV, Age Grading.

128 use of an elaborated form of the Ogden and Richards system for the analysis of individual logic.[4]

113 The first myth-ritual constellation to be presented under the foregoing method of analysis is the Wawilak myth and its interlocked ceremonies. It is represented diagrammatically in the following chart:

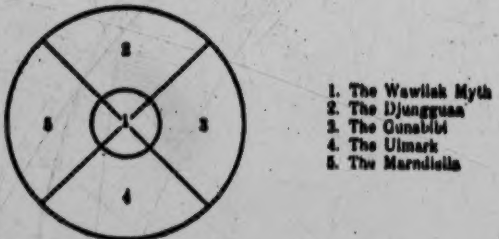

CHART X.—CONSTELLATION OF THE WAWILAK MYTH AND ITS RITUALS

113 196 The Wawilak myth is of extreme importance to the Murngin and is always present in their thinking. I had been in the Murngin country for only three days when I heard of it. The narrator, Yanindja, leader of the eastern Djirin clan, said, "This story belongs to the Djungguan. They [myth and ritual] are all the same thing." At the first circumcision ceremony I saw, clansmen from many parts of the country were present; and in explanation of their presence I was told by the leader, "People come to a Djungguan ceremony from everywhere because when that snake swallowed those two women he stood up right to the sky and sang out and people heard him from every place." (He meant that all the clans come to attend the ceremony.)

124 This most important of the myths was collected a great number of times and all the fundamental features and most of the secondary ones were always present, no matter how poor the narrator. The occasion was always just before, during, or just after the ceremonies supposed to be connected with it.

113 The story is primarily an account of how before the time of present-day man the two Wawilak sisters and their children marched out of the southern inland after committing clan incest, and came to the Liaalaomir totemic hole. Here the older sister profaned the pool of the Great Python by accidentally allowing her menstrual blood to fall

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[4] *The Meaning of Meaning*, by C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards, with an appendix by Bronislaw Malinowski, has been a great help to me in working out the ideas expressed in this chapter.

in the water hole; because of this, the women and their children were swallowed by Yurlunggur, the python. A great flood covered the land, after which the two women were regurgitated and finally swallowed again. 773

The myth has three primary and ten secondary movements. The first principal movement can be called "the coming of the two sisters from the southern interior"; the second, "the python's pool is profaned and he swallows the Wawilak women"; and the last, "man learns the secrets of the Wawilak rituals."

The Murngin unquestionably associate the Wawilak myth generally with the four ceremonies. The following statement by a Liaalaomir old man summarizes what I heard probably hundreds of times: "Those two old Wawilak women made the garmas [not all of them], and Djungguan, Gunabibi, Ulmark, and Marndiella for the Liaalaomir and Mandelpui people"; or, as it was sometimes expressed, "This Gunabibi and Ulmark, Djunguan, and Marndiella are all the Wawilak story. They belong to Mirrirmina [clan well of the Liaalaomir], where those two old women found the snake. Marndiella is the same as a garma [i.e., it is a less sacred ceremony than the others] because it belongs more to the women's camp." I was told by many that all people believe [824] that Muit (one of the sacred names of the python) caused the wet and dry season and that "the Wawilak women sang all the songs and dances [the four ceremonies mentioned above] to stop the rain and to stop the snakes who had surrounded them."

In one account I was given of the Wawilak Creation myth, "She [the older sister] sang the 'outside songs' when we cut young men. After she finished them she sang all the Djungguan songs and the Gunabibi songs. All the time she was trying to stop this rain but it wouldn't stop—she sang the 'inside' song of Djungguan—a-a-a—kak-yel—; she sang the songs where the subsection names are called out and the men sit in a circle, and she called out the clan names for the first time."

The young sister sang like the leaders do now, with a singing stick. That young girl said, "We will take the Yiritja way now." The rain did not stop and it got harder. They tried to sing something more "inside" (i.e., more sacred). "And they sang Yurlunggur [another name for the sacred python] and menstruation blood and this is the same as when the boys bring Yurlunggur in at night to the circle." (See Djungguan ceremony, page 270.) 773

The story of the two Wawilak women is always told when any one 796

113 196 of the Wawilak cycle of ceremonies is being given; continual references are made during the dancing and singing to the sisters and their antagonist, the snake; and one is always being reminded of this drama of the creation period. "What Bapa Indi [the python totem] called all these countries [the clan lands and local areas within them] and the languages he spoke [the dialects real or believed to be real which are the distinguishing marks of the clans] all we people speak today. That snake made these ceremonies then. He made this one [the Djungguan], and he made Gunabibi." "Circumcision started when those two women tried to cut their boys in the Djungguan, but the snake swallowed them before they could do it; and cutting today starts from that."

It is obvious from the above quotations that the Murngin generally connect these rituals with the Wawilak Creation myth. The difficulty with accepting the natives' verbal statement of a general connection is that it may be a mere rationalization on the part of the natives; the general relation might exist in their minds without a generic connection between the dramatically acted rituals and the oral Wawilak rite. We shall therefore examine each element of the ritual and myth to ascertain whether there is an organic connection between the two.

In general, it can be said that throughout the myth there is constant reference to the social organization and to the four rituals of the Wawilak constellation: the Djungguan, Gunabibi, Ulmark and Marndiella. When these are presented later, it will be seen that the primary locale of their drama is the Mirrirmina water hole.

MYTH OF THE WAWILAK WOMEN

113 A. The Coming of the Two Sisters from the Southern Interior

1. The two sisters and their children leave the Wawilak country and start toward the sea, naming the animals and plants as they go; but before they leave they have incestuous relations with their clansmen from which a child is born later in the Wawilak country.

It was the time of Bamun (the mythological period) when Wongar men walked about and modern men had not yet appeared. Everything was different. Animals were like men then! Those two Wawilak sisters had come a long distance. They were coming from the far interior to the Arafura Sea. They had come from the far interior Kardao Kardao country. This is a clan territory of the Dua moiety. They had come from the land of the Wawilak people for Kardao Kardao is their country. The wirkul (a young woman who has not had a child) was pregnant. The gungmun (a woman who has had a child; literally, "the giver") carried her own baby under her arm in a paper-bark "cradle." It was a male child.

The two women carried stone spears and hawks' down and bush cotton. On the way they killed iguana, opossum, and bandicoot for their food. They also gathered some bush yams (ippa). When they killed the animals, they gave them the names they bear today; they did the same for the yam. They gathered all the plants and animals that are in the Murngin country today. They said to each thing they killed or gathered, "You will be maraiin by and by."

When the two sisters started their journey they talked Djaun, later Rainbarngo, and still later Djinba; then they talked Wawilak, and finally Liaalaomir. They named the country as they went along. In the Wawilak country they copulated with the Wawilak Wongar men. These men were Dua, and they were Dua. This was very wrong and asocial.

The two women stopped to rest, for the younger felt the child she was carrying move inside her. She knew her baby would soon be born.

"Yeppa [sister], I feel near my heart this baby turning," she said.

The older one said, "Then let us rest."

They sat down, and the older sister put her hand on the abdomen of the younger sister and felt the child moving inside. She then massaged her younger sister, for she knew her labor pains had commenced. The baby was born there. It was Yiritja, for its mother was Dua. The country was still a part of the territory of the Wawilak clan.

After the child was born the older sister gathered more bush food, then the two moved on toward the sea. They stopped at various places and gave all of them names. They named all the clan territories and the localities within their borders. They first rested at Djirri Djirri (quail place), then at Wakngay (crow place), Dung Dunga (fish spear place), Tarbella (white oyster place), and Katatanga (falling meteor place). All these localities were Dua and were within the country of the Wawilak clan. Although the Wawilak sisters went to almost all the clans of the Dua moiety they never walked on the country of the Yiritja moiety.

"Come on, sister," said the older, "we'll go quickly now." They drank water at the last place and hurried on.

2. The flight of the food animals.

They did not stop until they sat down at the great Mirrirmina (rock python's back) water hole in the country of the Liaalaomir clan. It is in the bottom of this well in the deep subterranean waters below the upper waters that Yurlunggur, the great copper snake, or python totem of the Dua moiety, lives. They called the country for the first time Mirrirmina.

The older sister took her fire drill and made a fire. She started cooking all the yams and other bush food that she had gathered and all the animals that they had killed on their journey.

173 "Sister, you cook my food for me, too," said the younger one.

"Be patient," said the older. She then gathered some paper bark and fashioned a bed for her younger sister's newborn child. As she did this, she said, "By and by, sister, we must circumcise these two small sons of ours."

"Yes, sister," said the younger.

As soon as they cooked the food each animal and plant jumped out of the fire and ran to the Mirrirmina water hole and jumped into it. They all went into this Djungguan and Gunabibi well. The crab ran in first. When he did this, the two women talked Liaalaomir for the first time; before this they had talked Wawilak. The other plants and animals followed the crab. The yams ran like men, as did the iguanas, frilled-neck lizard, darpa, ovarku snake, rock python, sea gull, sea eagles, native companions and crocodiles.[5] Each ran and dived into the clans' totemic well and disappeared from sight.

B. The Python's Sacred Pool Is Profaned and He Swallows the Wawilak Women

3. The profanement of the pool.

The older woman went out to gather bark to make a bed for her sister's baby after it was born. She walked over some of the water of the Mirrirmina well. Her menstrual blood fell in the totem well and was carried down the sacred clan water hole, where Yurlunggur, the Big Father, lives.

4. Yurlunggur raises himself to swallow the women; the rain comes and the flood commences covering the earth.

When the menstrual blood dropped into the pool Yurlunggur smelled the odor of this pollution from where he was lying in the black water beneath the floor of the totem well. His head was lying quietly on the bottom of the pit. He raised his head and smelled again and again.

"Where does this blood come from?" he said. He opened the bottom of the well by throwing the stone which covers its base out of the well on to the land by the women's camp. (This stone is near the camp today [823] and can be seen by those who go there. "It is now a snake's head.") He crawled out slowly, like a snake does, from the well. When he came out

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[5] One of the Liaalaomir leaders of the Wawilak ceremonies gave me the following list of animals and plants named and collected by the Wawilak sisters: "When they came from the Roper River they named iguana, bandicoot, opossum, snake, honeybee, fish, fresh-water fish and salt-water fish, shark, jabiru, shore birds, yam, big yam and little yam, water lily, water, salt water, fresh-water turtle and salt-water turtle, fresh-water snake and salt-water snake, all the different kinds of clansmen, lizard, small rat, brush turkey, and all the animals and things they saw." It was evident that he was attempting to make a definitive list of all the plants and animals, and that he was using as a memory device the names of the things he directed the chorus to sing in the various ceremonies of the Wawilak constellation.

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he sucked some of the well water into his mouth. He spat it into the sky. Soon a cloud about the size of a man's hand appeared from nowhere in the center of the sky. As Yurlunggur slowly rose from out of the bottom of the pool the totemic well water rose too and flooded the earth. He pulled himself up on the stone which he had thrown, and laid his head there. He looked around him. He saw the women and their babies. Yurlunggur was older brother to these women, and they were sisters to him. Their children were his wakus, and he was gawel to them.

Yurlunggur continued to look at them. He hissed. This was to call out for rain. There was no cloud in the sky until then, but soon the two sisters saw a small, a very small, black cloud appear in the heavens. They did not see the great python lying there watching them.

The cloud grew larger and larger, and soon the rain came down. The Wawilak sisters hurriedly built a house to be ready for the rain. They named the forked sticks they used as uprights. The women went inside the house. They did not know where this rain had come from; they did not know that the older sister's menstrual blood had defiled the Mirrirmina water hole and had made Yurlunggur angry.

The Wawilak women went to sleep, but the rain poured down harder and harder and awakened them.

5. The sisters sing the rituals to prevent the flood and the snake's swallowing them.

The gungmun said, "Sister, where does this rain come from? There's no cloud in the north or south, and there is no cloud in the east or west, but over us is this huge black cloud. I think something is wrong. I think something terrible is going to happen."

She got up and went outside. The younger one stayed within the house and sang. The gungmun beat the ground with her yam stick; she knew now that Yurlunggur was going to swallow her, and she wanted to stop the rain. She sang, "Yurlunggur, don't you come out and swallow us. We are good, and we are clean." While she sang she danced around the house. The two sisters then called out the taboo names of the Mirrirmina well.

While the older sister sang and danced around the house, and the younger sister sang inside it to stop the rain from coming down and to drive the great cloud away, they were being surrounded by all the snakes in the land. The pythons, death adders, tree snakes, black snakes, tiger snakes, iguanas, the blue-tongued lizard, snails, caterpillars, and all the Dua snakes came up around them in a circle, for they had heard the call of their father, Yurlunggur. It was night and the women did not see them.

The gungmun first sang all the songs now sung in the general camp. After this she sang all the songs sung in the general camp during the Gunabibi. These are the less powerful songs. She did this first, for she thought they would stop the rain, but it did not stop. She was afraid of this rain, for it came out of a cloud she could not understand, because this cloud had come from nowhere.

She sang then the taboo songs of the Djungguan—"Ah! Ah! Ah! Kak Ye!!!" She sang the songs when the subsection names are called out in the Djungguan. She took the Dua subsections first.

The young sister sang like the leader of the Djungguan ceremony does today. She kept time with singing sticks. She said, "We'll turn to the Yiritja subsections now. We'll call out the Yiritja peoples [subsections]."

They sang the garma songs first, for they are not "strong" and belong to the camp of the women. Then they sang the songs of the Marndiella, for it is only a little more powerful, and its songs only slightly more taboo. Then they sang Djungguan and Ulmark.

The rain continued and came down harder and harder. They decided that they must sing something even more powerful, more taboo, and deeper within the ceremonial camp of the men.

6. Yurlunggur swallows the women, and the earth is covered with a flood.

They sang Yurlunggur and menstrual blood.

When Yurlunggur heard these words, he crawled into the camp of the two women and their two children. They had suddenly fallen into a deep sleep from his magic. He licked the women and children all over preparatory to swallowing them. He bit the noses of each and made the blood come. He swallowed the old woman first, the wirkul next, and the little boys last.

He waited for daylight. When dawn came he uncoiled and went out a short distance in the bush, because he was too near the water. He wanted to leave the women in a dry place.

He raised himself and stood very straight.[6] He was like the trunk of a very tall straight tree. His head reached as high as a cloud. When he raised himself to the sky the flood waters came up as he did. They flooded and covered the entire earth. No tree or hill showed above them. When he fell later, the water receded, and at the same time there was dry ground.

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[6] In some of the Wawilak stories the snake, after he has swallowed the two women and put his head in the clouds, flies over the country and names the various parts as he goes. "Wongar went on and on flying and flying and flying and naming and naming and naming with the young sister, the old sister and the children inside him." This is told in a monotone.—"Then he came down in the same country again and spit them out. They were still alive." When the snake flew over the country he also gave the people their various languages, according to some accounts. A Liaalaomir man is speaking: "I am a rock snake. I call Yurlunggur father and he calls me child. That snake flew over the country when he swallowed those women, and he talked my language. I talk that language now." In other accounts, when the snake flew about in the sky he spat on the various clan areas. The ones usually named are the Liaalaomir and Perango totemic wells. It is said that he only spat there because these snakes (Liaalomir and Perango totems) are large and the other snakes are smaller (not important).

While he was high in the sky and had the two women and children inside him he sang all the Marndiella, Djungguan, Gunabibi and Ulmark ceremonies. 773

7. The Dua clan snakes and Yurlunggur discuss what they have eaten and discover they have different languages but the same totemic emblems. They tell their language names, the names of their totemic water holes, and recite the list of their totems, and kinship is established.

The other Wongar Wirtits (totemic pythons) stood up too. They were all Dua, as Yurlunggur was, and none was Yiritja. Yurlunggur was higher than all the rest. He was the leader for those other snakes, and was more powerful than they.[7]

The Wessel Island python (Perango clan) raised himself. "What is your language?" he said.

"I am Liaalaomir. What is yours?"

"I am Perango Yaernungo."

"What is yours?" Yurlunggur then said to the python on the Howard Island mainland.

"I am Liagaomir."

"What is yours?" he asked the Banyan Island python.

"I am Karmalanga language. My country is Kolpaiyunala" [a tree from whose roots fiber string is made].

The Mandelpui, Wawilak, Boun, Djirin, Kalpu, Merango, Djapu, Djawark, and all Dua clans were asked by Yurlunggur what their language was, and each answered the language of his country (see pages 39 to 51).

The Mirrirmina snake said then, "I see we all talk different languages. It would be better if we talked the same tongue. We can't help this now. It is better then that we all have our ceremonies together, for we own the same maraiin[8] [totemic emblems]."

They all sang out together then, and their voices were the thunder and roared all over the land and sea.

The python Wongars still stood on their tails high in the sky. The great Yurlunggur turned to a Daii Dua snake. He said, "What have you been eating?"

"I have been eating fresh-water fish" (Dua variety).

"How did he taste?"

"Oh, he was very good. Nice and fat."

"What are you going to do, now that you have eaten him?"

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[7] There is no doubt that all peoples in the area recognize the leadership of the Liaalaomir python. He is the highest in the sky and the deepest in the well. His clan leaders always lead the Djungguan ceremony when they are present, even if the other clan leaders who ordinarily lead this performance are present. 776 614

[8] See glossary of Native Terms.

113 "I'm going to spew him up and look at him and eat him again for the last time."

He was going to do what the live pythons do now; they eat something, swallow it, spew it up, lick it, and eat it again. It does not come up again.

Yurlunggur now asked the Djapu python what he had eaten.

"I ate a wallaby [Dua moiety]. I'm going to let him out."

He inquired of the others. The Merango snake had eaten a small plains bird; the Kalpu, a sand crab; Djirin, a green sea turtle; Naludaer, a small shellfish; Wawilak, a bird; Mandelpui, a fresh-water fish; Karmalanga, honey. All of the snakes of the Dua clan were asked. Wessel Island snake was asked last. He is second highest and only lower in rank than Mirrirmina snake.

"What have you been eating?" the Liaalaomir snake asked the Wessel Island one.

"I won't tell you."

"Come on, tell me. I've heard lightning and thunder and wind in your country. Something has happened there."

"You give me something and I'll tell you."

"Come on, you and I are brothers. Remember I call you brother."

"If I tell you, you must tell me, because I call you wawa [older brother] and you called me yukiyuko [younger brother] just as you said."

"I'll tell you. I've eaten parrot fish."

"What color?"

"Blue."

"What kind of teeth?"

"White."

"What you have eaten is no good. Why didn't you eat iguana or stone kangaroo?"

"But what did you eat?" replied the Wessel Island snake.

"I won't tell you."

"Why not?"

The Mirrirmina snake raised itself higher and higher into the sky. He laid his neck and head on a cloud. His eyes shot lightning. He felt ashamed.

"Come on and tell me, my big brother," said the Wessel Island snake again.

The Wessel Island snake continued to insist, and his head came closer and closer as his body writhed across the clouds toward the Mirrirmina python. He was very angry.

After a long time Yurlunggur said, "I ate two sisters and a small boy and girl."

8. The fall of Yurlunggur and the decline of the flood when the southeastern wind blows.

When he said this the southeastern monsoon started blowing from off

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the land. As it did this the head of the Wessel Island snake hurriedly pulled back to its own well. The wind had stopped him from coming farther; he wanted to make a waterway from Wessel Island to Mirrirmina. Yurlunggur roared and fell to the ground at the same time.

When he fell, he split the ground open and made the present dance ground at the Liaalaomir ceremonial place. He lay there on the ground and thought, "Those two sisters and their children are dead inside me now."

Yurlunggur started cleansing his mouth with his cheeks and tongue. He spat several times. He said to his sons, "I'm going to spew." He regurgitated the two women and the little boys.[9] They were dropped into an ants' nest.

The Wessel Island snake, when he heard what Yurlunggur said, was disgusted. "You've eaten your own wakus and yeppas," he said. This was a terrible thing.

9. The totemic trumpet appears and Yurlunggur goes back to the Mirrirmina water hole where he gathers all the snake creatures, returns, and reswallows the women and once again falls and the flood is ended.

The Wongar Yurlunggur crawled slowly back to his water hole. He went inside but kept his head up to watch. At this time the Yurlunggur totemic trumpet came out of the well and lay beside him. No one brought it out and no one blew it, but it sang out like it does now.

The Yurlunggur trumpet blew over the two women and their two sons. They were lying there like they had fainted. Some green ants came out then and bit the women and children. They jumped.

The trumpet continued to walk around, while the Wongar Yurlunggur looked on. The women and children were alive again, and he had thought them dead. He picked up two singing sticks (bilmel) and crawled out of the water hole. Before he emerged he called all his sons, who were in the well, and put these true snakes, lizards, and snails on his head and neck.

He hit the mothers and their babies on their heads with the sticks and swallowed them again. He meant to keep them down this time.

He felt sick again, for once more he had swallowed Dua people. He decided to stand straight up.

When he raised up the Mandelpui snake shouted, "What did you eat?"

"Bandicoot," he lied.

"You do not tell the truth."

"Two Dua women and two Yiritja boys."

When he said this he fell again. This time he made the Gunabibi and

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[9] In some accounts a boy and girl are swallowed, and usually also regurgitated; but in many of the stories told by the older Liaalaomir men the children are male, and not spewed up by the snake.

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Ulmark dance grounds by his fall (as the first time he fell he formed a Djungguan place). After his fall, he crawled into the Liaalaomir well and went down into the subterranean waters. He put a stone over his entrance and stopped the flood of water that had been coming out. He swam in the underground waters to the Wawilak country, for he wanted to take the mothers and children back to their own country; here he spat them out for the last time. He left them there and came back to his own country. The two women turned to stone and one can still see them in the Wawilak country today. Yurlunggur kept the boys inside him, for they were Yiritja and he was Dua.

The two women did not circumcise their two sons as they intended, because Yurlunggur had interfered before they were ready. It was because they so intended, and said for other people to perform this act, that people cut their sons today.

C. Man Learns the Secrets of the Creator Sisters' Rituals

10. Man learns the secrets of the Wawilak women and at this time starts the use of these rituals by modern men through using the women's blood and the ritual paraphernalia brought with them to Mirrirmina. Man is warned by the women in a dream to continue to practice these ceremonies forever.

While all this great drama was being acted in the country of the Liaalaomir, two Wawilak Wongar men had heard the terrible noise of the snake's voice (thunder) and they had seen the skies fill with lightning and felt the downpour of the rain. They knew something was the matter, so they followed the two women's tracks. It took them many days and nights to get there. They finally saw the snake track.

"I think the sisters had trouble," said one. "I think that maybe a crocodile or python has killed them."

They arrived at Mirrirmina. They had followed the Goyder River down. They saw all the ants walking around everywhere, like they smelled something that was dead and they wanted to eat. They then found all the snake tracks. The well water shone like a rainbow. When they saw this they knew there was a snake in there.[10]

They went farther in the bush and saw the ceremonial ground where Yurlunggur's fall had made the dance places.

"Wongar python has been here," they said.

When they looked carefully at the stone, they found blood from the heads of the two women and boys.

"What will we do?"

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[10] Cf. Radcliffe-Brown, A. R., "The Rainbow Serpent Myth of Australia," Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, *Journal*, London, 1926, Vol. LVI, pages 19-25.

"Run and get some paper bark and make a basket," said the older 773
Wawilak man.

They gathered two baskets of blood, and went to the dance grounds. They made a bush house on part of the ground that represents the snake's tail.

"You take all the hawk's feathers, bush cotton, and this blood, and we'll paint ourselves. You do this, and I shall go cut a hollow log and make a Yurlunggur trumpet."

Each did his task. The hollow ridgepole from the Wawilak sisters' house was used for the trumpet totemic emblem of Yurlunggur.

The sun went down. They left the blood till morning. They slept, and while they were in a deep sleep they dreamed of what the two women sang and danced when they were trying to keep Yurlunggur from swallowing them. The Wawilak women came back as spirits and taught the two men the Djungguan songs and dances that are for the outside general camp, and the inside ones that are for the men's camp. They told the men the way to do the Marndiella, Gunabibi and Ulmark ceremonies. They sang Yurlunggur and Muit. The men slept on and dreamed that Yurlunggur brought out all the iguanas from the Mirrirmina well. (See Djungguan ritual, pages 283 to 284.)

The two sisters said to men, "This is all now. We are giving you this dream so you can remember these important things. You must never forget these things we have told you tonight. You must remember every time each year these songs and dances. You must paint with blood and feathers for Marndiella, Gunabibi and Djungguan. You must dance all the things we saw and named on our journey, and which ran away into the well."

After the men danced the new dances and ceremonies for the first time they went back to their own country. "We dance these things now, because our Wongar ancestors learned them from the two Wawilak sisters."

THE DJUNGGUAN CEREMONY

The great ceremonies all take place in the dry season, and always 796
on the men's ceremonial grounds. Actual participation is only by initiated men, although the women, not allowed in the ceremonial grounds and not thought of by the men as in the ceremony, play an important rôle.

All the ceremonies are associated with age grading, as being partici- [561
pated in by men initiated into certain age grades, or serving to initiate 614
a man into a higher status; and all are associated with moiety or clan 616]
totems.

All the rituals have ceremonial leaders. The participants paint them- 796
selves with sacred totemic designs and usually employ feather orna- 302

852 moiety." This division refers to the dance ground and not to Yurlunggur, who was Dua. B is the snake's anus; D is the head where the initiates stand, both in the circumcision part of the ceremony and also in that portion devoted to showing and explaining the totemic emblem to the older initiates.

The circle E is the special house for Yurlunggur erected on the first day of the ceremony and is a windbreak about four feet high and fifteen feet across. The dancers who paint themselves as iguanas in the totem scene ceremony hide there while the earlier part of the Djungguan is taking place.

533 778 When the Yurlunggur dance ground is made, a cycle of songs is sung over the man who gives his blood to the ceremony (see page 274) by the old men. This makes the ground maraiin because it now possesses the essence of Yurlunggur.

773 852 *Native Interpretation.*—The warngaitja is symbolical of the two boys who are being circumcised. "The sticks are all the same as the boys being cut. The bushes on top are all the same as the hair of those boys." I was told each time I heard the Wawilak myth that when "the little sister sang inside the house, the older sister danced around the house just the same as women do now around the warngaitja pole in the Djungguan." When new groups arrive at the Djungguan ceremony, the ritual is being started, and they dance around the warngaitja singing "A-wa!—a-wa!" it is the sound of flood water flowing or of rain falling: "They do that because those two old women did that when 887 562 they tried to stop the rain." In the Djungguan ceremony older women ordinarily do the dancing and wailing. "No young women, only old women do this. Old women are better for the boys—it helps them more. Those old women when they dance are all the same as those Wongar women."

852 B. THE DANCING EACH EVENING AROUND THE WARNGAITJA. THE INITIATES ARE CARRIED INTO THE MEN'S GROUND

1. The women wail over the neophytes while dancing around the warngaitja pole (or poles); the men rush in and remove the boys to their own grounds.
2. The circle of men around the fire and the sequence of songs and dances.

1. Until the last day of the ceremony dances in the Djungguan are not held during the day except occasionally in the early morning. But

(15) A fresh-water, non-poisonous snake (Bog-min-bog-min) 852
(16) Fresh-water crayfish (Run-nar-ra-nar-ra-na), Yiritja moiety 533

The following dances take place:

(1) A small hawk (Kar-kar-kain-bur-na mal-le-wir-de-wir-de) 852
(2) Dollar bird (?) (Ko-ko-mir-ding), Dua moiety 535

Big gray kangaroo, wallaby, and rock kangaroo are also danced. This ends the ceremony for the evening, and the refrain "Wah! wah! wah!" (sound of running water) is sung.

Whenever wallaby is sung in the above cycle of songs two men stand up and dance at one side. Sometimes they are joined by several others. The men hold their hands in front of their chests with the fingers pointed downward to imitate the posture of the front legs and paws of the wallaby. They dance jumping sideways as one often sees the wallaby move when frightened. At intervals they fall flat on the ground, remain there a moment, then arise and start the dance over again.

While the chorus of men sing and the men at the side dance, one man stands by the side of the ring and calls out in a high shrill voice, "Kawk! Kawk!" This is supposed to be the call of the wedge-tailed eagle.

Native Interpretation.—"The warngaitja was put up the first time by the two Wawilak women. They cut off the stringy bark tree and put it up and tied it with bush string. Now men do this." "Those women said, 'We two sisters, we'll do this and make up this warngaitja dance and everybody will do this after us, but the ranga and maraiin will belong inside of the men's ground.'" (For further interpretation of the Warngaitja ceremony, see Section E, where the ceremony is performed for the last time.) 852 773

C. Yurlunggur Comes Out

1. The older men sing Yurlunggur and his totem well and several bring out the trumpet. It is blown over the uncircumcised initiates. The older boys (those about to pass into a higher age group) hide their heads under the women's mats. 852

1. Just before the Yurlunggur song is sung (13 of the cycle in Section B), the leader of the ceremony calls out the totems of the Liaalaomir clan and of other clans which possess the same totems as this

852 group (see pages 39-51 for the list of totems possessed by the local clans), beginning with the great rock python Yurlunggur.

One man of this clan (or of another clan in the Dua moiety) leaves the circle and walks to the edge of the nearby bushes in the direction of the old men's camp and cries out the totemic name of the country where Yurlunggur swallowed the two Creator Sisters and their babies. This country belongs to the Liaalaomir clan and the names are those of its sacred water hole as well as those of the country (see page 46 for the names of the country).

Finally Yurlunggur's tongue is called. All the younger men, who have not been initiated into the higher parts of the men's association by seeing the totem of the rock python, lay their heads on the ground and the older men cover them with women's pandanus mats (ainmaras). The uncircumcised boys who are to be initiated in this ceremony have usually gone to sleep long before this time. They are awakened and their heads covered in the same way.

The older men continue sitting with their heads up in an attitude of expectation. Four or five men have left the group and have quietly slipped into the bush. The men are still singing the totemic names of the python. As if from some far-off subterranean stone chamber one hears a kind of bellowing roar. It is a weird sound. To those who have been reared on stories of mediaeval knights and their dragons the sound is like that which one imagines a wounded dragon would make. The roar continues for some moments, which the initiates say appears to be a long time.

852 534 The Yurlunggur trumpet (totemic emblem) appears. It is carried by the three or four men who shortly before disappeared, while another blows it. When it is within a few feet of the circle its carriers stand still while the trumpeter continues blowing. Yurlunggur's "head" is pointed toward the circle of men and the neophytes. It is blown over them. It is then turned around, and with the man still blowing it, is carried back to the old men's camp, which is the totem house. The carriers and trumpeter sneak back to the circle and all the initiates are told to uncover their heads.

773 852 *Native Interpretation.*—"These two sisters sang Yurlunggur and menstrual blood. They sang blood because that is what brought the snake when Yurlunggur came. This is the same when the men bring Yurlunggur in at night to the circle. The iguanas bring him in. Yurlunggur crawled right into the camp with the women and their

children. He swallowed them." (These statements are also applicable to the sacred songs sung while the subsection names are called out—see Section B.) During a Djungguan one of the older men said, pointing to the trumpet, "That is the real Great Father. He is also the real father for these boys who are going to be cut." 773 852

D. THE DANCES ON THE TRIANGULAR DANCE GROUND

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1. The men dance a variety of animal dances, while the initiates stand on the edge of the dance ground and are instructed by the old men.

1. All the men then collect and go over to the dance ground. A fire is lighted in the center. The Yiritja men dance while the Dua men look on; then the Dua dance while the Yiritja watch. The same leader conducts the songs for the men of both moieties. Sometimes two moieties dance together instead of separately, but this is considered less proper.

After the alternation of the dances by the moieties, all the dancers join hands and, calling out in turn wedge-tailed eagle and kangaroo, they stamp out the fire. A new fire is started in the same place and all of the men go out at the anal end of the snake dance ground to the side. They divide into two groups, one representing the Yiritja gray kangaroo and the other the Dua wallaby. They squat on their haunches and hop into the dance ground at the anal end, and when they reach the fire they dance around it as one group. They fall down and lie in a heap around it. This ends the ceremony on the dance ground for the night. They return to the dance ground in the main camp calling out like hawks[18] after they have given the sound that symbolizes running water. Meanwhile in the old men's camp can be heard the low bellowing of the python trumpet "to let everyone know that the Great Father is in camp." It is late and the women have gone to bed; their fires are still burning when the men disband after the day's ceremony.

All the men participate in the above dances, except the boys to be out the fire on the dance ground with their feet. The hawks call out 852 their totemic names and the rock kangaroos shout their taboo names. 535 The kangaroos are Dua and the hawks Yiritja. Usually the men who dance the Dua animal belong to the Dua, and the men who dance the Yiritja bird, to the Yiritja moiety.

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[18] The hawk is a Yiritja bird supposed always to be on the lookout for small snakes believed to be their chief antagonists.—Tremendous grass fires are made all over the country when the dry season has parched grass and brush to the point where they are easily burned, to clear the land so that it is easy to hunt over. They are made particularly by the women to aid them in catching bandicoot and other small game. At this time hawks gather about, intent upon catching snakes, grasshoppers and other small game which run before the fires. [825 224]

Early in the morning, before the heat of the day, ceremonies are also held. The uncircumcised initiates are again placed before the head of the dance ground with one or more old men to explain the meaning of the various dances and songs. The first set of dancers are Dua honeybees. They come in one at a time in a zigzag line from the bush and enter the dance ground at the tail of the snake. They kneel before the boys and lie down with the arms stretched above the head and the legs at full length. The last two dancers dance around the others. They all lie down on their backs in one or more lines. Each man places his head between the legs of the man above him and stretches his arms above him at an angle so that they cross the legs and form a diamond pattern, which is supposed to symbolize the honeybee and is one of the few dominant designs found in the totemic paintings of the Murngin.

They squirm forward and backward to represent bees in a hive, while they cried out, "Wah! Wah!! Wah!!" They leave the head of the dance ground and return to the bush. The faces of the little boys remain inexpressive, like masks, throughout the dance.

Yiritja kangaroos are then danced. The Dua wallabys are in a line directly back of the tail of the snake, and to the rear of them are the Yiritja kangaroos. The two lines of dancers pretend to fight with their forepaws as these marsupials box. The leader beats his singing [534] sticks together and leads the ceremony while standing back of the dancers. He sings wallaby and kangaroo.

Farther back in the bushes a man, painted with a "string harness" worn by present-day women but representing here that of the two old Creator Sisters, stands with a spear articulated to his spear-thrower. He sneaks up toward the animals as the two lines form again after their sham fight. The two lines merge. The "hunter" throws his spear and "kills" the leader. He limps off and, followed by the wallabys and kangaroos, falls down at the head of the snake.

Native Interpretation.—The triangular dance ground in the Djung- 773 guan has the same interpretation as both the excavated and the surface 852 dance grounds of the Ulmark ceremony. A dance ground is a snake's

773 852 body and it is usually thought of as having the women and children inside it. Frequently the green leaves surrounding it are said to be the women after he has spewed them up. During one of the many times I was told the story of the Wawilak women, when the narrator got to the moment in the drama when the sisters were seeking something more powerful to stop Yurlunggur and they sang menstrual blood, he interrupted himself and said, "When the dance place for the Djungguan is square and not triangular it is a camp of these women. When it is this way [triangular] it is a snake's body. At Mirrirmina you can see the holes where all the sons of Yurlunggur crawled around the two women and you can see the dance ground where the snake fell after swallowing them."

852 E. The Bloodletting

778 1. Yurlunggur is painted.

796 2. Yurlunggur is blown over the men who give their blood; the names of the ancestors are called.

304 1. All during this section of the ceremony the totemic trumpet is kept in the old men's camp or in the specially built ceremonial hut (the python's totem well). During the preliminary stages of this section Yurlunggur is painted.

852 796 304 561 2. On the day before the circumcision a bloodletting ceremony takes place in the old men's camp. The blood is to be used as an adhesive substance to hold the birds' down and native cotton to the dancers' bodies. Before a man offers his blood for the first time Yurlunggur is blown all over his body; after the first time it is unusual. This ceremony is one of the ritual methods by which a man is admitted into the higher order of the men's association. Though it is not obligatory for him to go through this rite as it is for the young boy to go through the circumcision ceremony, all of the men feel it their privilege to contribute their blood either the first time they enter the old men's grounds or at some later period. Most men, while still in their prime, give their blood every time this ceremony is held.

852 796 Here is an account of one of the many blood sacrifice rituals witnessed by the author:

304 533 The old men sing over the man, Lika. The "mouth" of Yurlunggur is placed against him and the trumpeter blows all over his body while the trumpet's notes keep time with the slow rhythm of the singing sticks of the leader.

852 796 formance by wailing and dancing around the warngaitja. The men enter the camp, the boys on their backs now covered with bundles of bushes and leaves. The boys are placed on the ground under the pile of bushes by the warngaitja poles. The men stand with spears around them. The song ends. The men snatch the warngaitja from out of the ground, take the two boys, and run away into the men's ground. The women follow them singing flood water, stop at the edge of the men's grounds and return to the center of the camp, while the men continue on to the fire circle.

852 796 773 826 *Native Interpretation.*—The blood that runs from an incision and with which the dancers paint themselves and their emblems is something more than a man's blood—it is the menses of the old Wawilak women. I was told during a ceremony: "That blood we put all over those men is all the same as the blood that came from that old woman's vagina. It isn't the blood of those men any more because it has been sung over and made strong. The hole in the man's arm isn't that hole any more. It is all the same as the vagina of that old woman that had blood coming out of it. This is the blood that snake smelled when he was in the Mirrirmina well. This is true for Djungguan and Gunabibi."—"When a man has got blood on him [is ceremonially decorated with it], he is all the same as those two old women when they had blood. All the animals ran away and they couldn't cook them."

When the trumpet blows over the man giving his blood, it is Yurlunggur risen out of his well to swallow the women and their two children because he has smelled the menstrual blood of the older sister. Several well-informed men told me, "When Yurlunggur blows over them when they cut their arms it is like that snake comes up and smells that woman's blood when he is getting ready to swallow them." The songs sung refer to the profanement of the pool and the swallowing of the women by the snake, which means that the man who is giving his blood for the first time is being swallowed by the snake and is at the moment the old woman.

The first *giving* of blood was made by the Wawilak sisters themselves, since it was the blood from their heads and those of their children which was first used by man. "When the Wongar men [who came after the women had been swallowed] looked closely at the stone, they found blood from the heads of the two women and boys [where the snake had bitten them; see myth, subdivision 6]. 'What

will we do?' 'Run and get some paper bark and make a panikin out 852
of it.'" 796

"They tied up two panikins and put the blood in them and went 773
to the ceremonial grounds.

"Take all the bird feathers and we will paint ourselves. You do this 826
and I will go and cut Yurlunggur."

It is only the men's blood that is of the right quality for use in the Djungguan ceremony. Women's blood cannot be used. "Woman's and man's blood are just the same but woman's blood is no good. Wongar would not allow it to be used. He will only take men's blood." The blood is not only the menstrual blood of the women in the eyes of the old men; "That blood, that old woman's blood that ran out here [informant pointed to his pudenda], that blood is a live Wongar's blood too. He [the man who was giving the blood] does that for Wongar too. They blow that trumpet over him [the blood-giver] because the snake came out and smelled that woman's blood when she went after paper bark." These last statements were made within the totemic camp of the old men while they and I watched the young man who gave his blood for the first time.

When "Djili-djili-la" is sung after "blood" and "Yurlunggur," it, 852
in singing form, "is just the same as when the snake comes out the
first time," by which the various men who told me this meant "when 796
Yurlunggur comes out" as described in Section C. In other words, 773
these two parts of the ceremony are equivalent.—The next song, 533
"Earthquake," was interpreted: "Those two women came to that
place [Mirrirmina]. Yurlunggur smelled them and turned over and
moved the ground." Whenever an earthquake occurs in Murngin 823
country it is always said that Bapa Indi (Yurlunggur or Muit) is
moving in the subterranean waters.—When the next song, "Snake's Tongue" was sung, a leader of one of the Djungguan said, "Those two women try to stop that snake's tongue. He wanted to swallow them. That is what this means. They gave his tongue an inside [sacred] name." Another man said, "When that trumpet blows he is singing out and asking, 'Which one has got strong blood?' It is like he is choosing the man he wants. When he gets that man he plays all over him just like he was licking him. He did those two Wongar women that way before he swallowed them. This makes the man's blood come out quick and easy."—After the next song, "Dua Lightning," the leader of one of the ceremonies said, "That is the forked tongue of the snake. Storms and thunder come from him. That is

852 796 773 533 when he is after those two Wongar women." When "Rain Cloud" was sung the leader said to me, "Those two women are trying to stop that rain because it is coming like a flood and trying to cover them up, it is all the same as if they were being swallowed by a snake."—"Those women are trying to sing to stop the rain but they are only making sounds" (that is, they are having no effect on the rain or snake)—also a comment when "Cloud in the Sky" was sung. —After the completion of this cycle, the leader said to me, "No man made these songs. Those two women made them to keep the two lines [Yiritja and Dua moieties] sacred—to keep marriage straight."

852 796 775 The singing of the real and mythological ancestors' names is much more significant than merely recalling the names of the dead, for the souls of the dead are believed to be within the totemic trumpet itself (and within Mandelprindi and Yermerlindi in the Gunabibi ceremony and Uvar in the Ulmark ceremony). "When we have Djungguan, Gunabibi and other corroborees we men tell the women when a man is dead [recently died] that he has come back because that Djungguan has been named his big name [totemic name]. All the men believe he has come back and that all the souls of the dead on that side [moiety reference] are in the ranga [totemic emblem]. If my older brother should die, next Narra or Djungguan we have, he would come back and go in that ranga. That is why we get angry when someone does a bad thing [unsanctioned sexual relation, open fighting, and the like] when we have a Narra or Djungguan. We must stop that corroboree and throw the ritual string away because our old marikmos and maris and kutaras [et cetera] get angry with us and make us sick. [842] The little babies when they are fish [unborn] live in the same place with marikmo and mari souls. That marikmo and mari watch us. If we are good, and we don't steal, or have other men's wives, he sends us fish to our wives." "You can't see that spirit when it comes back but you can see it in a dream. That man can be Yiritja or Dua. The man who has dreamed goes to the leader and says that so-and-so has come back, and that he says he has come to look at his children and to bring Yurlunggur. That leader asks the man which way the man in the dream said to make Yurlunggur for this next time, because he knows the man understands from this dream." This dream can come before or at the same time as the ceremony and the power name of the returning dead man can be given to the trumpet. Even though "spirits go to the islands of the dead,[14] or the whale takes them to the

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[14] See Myths, Barnumbir and the Island of the Dead, pages 524-528.

Warumeri well, they come back to the ranga and go inside of it and 852
into the well." 796

The souls of women likewise return: "When a woman dies she 775
becomes a Bir-im-bir [spirit] Wongar and goes to the same well as a man. She can come back to her ranga and is like those two old Wawilak sisters."

When the men come out and take the boy away from the women, 852
they are the snake or the flood and the women are the Wongar
women who made the first camp. On the last evening when the men 796
come out they stop at the edge of the camp and they sing rain. When 535
the boys are left under the piles of bushes they are the children of the 773
Wawilak women. "Those boys left there alone are all the same as those babies that were born to the Wongar women. They left their babies there the same way to dance: the women dancing around the Warngaitja mean that." When the men stand with their spears around the pole they sing rain, which means that the flood has come, and when they pull the warngaitja out of the ground and rush away and the others take the bushes off the boys and run away with them to the men's ground, the chorus sings flood. "That means that the flood came and took these two yam sticks and carried them away."—"A flood takes them away after the rain, that is why we sing Wa—wa—wa. That means that the flood water is running."

"When the boys lie there and the men pull the bushes off them that means that snake spitting them up. They are spirits now." (This refers to the first time the python swallows the two women.)

F. The Last Dances in the Men's Ground 852

1. The dancers are painted with human blood. 302
2. The boys who are to be circumcised are painted.
3. The initiates are shown the dances of the animals and the triangular ground and are instructed.
4. The older boys who have run away are caught and Yurlunggur comes out of the well and is shown to them.

1. The climax of the ceremony occurs next day. All the men paint with the blood that has been let the day before. The bloodletting occurs one day before the circumcision rite instead of the same day, because the exposure to the air gives the blood a more adhesive quality.

The blood is now sacred and powerful. It is, say the natives, as if it 852
were a totemic emblem in itself. It has the power of Yurlunggur in 302
it because he blew over the blood-giver. It is also powerful because the 778

852 [302] down. The bushes are pulled back from the "Mirrirmina well." All the men painted like iguanas lie in it on their backs with a symbol of the iguana painted on their abdomens. Yurlunggur, the trumpet, lies among them with one man blowing it. The trumpet is played over an iguana while he crawls on his belly out of the well and on to the dance ground. The trumpet then goes back for another and continues until all the iguanas are out of the well and in a line at the apex of the triangular dance ground. A trumpeter then repeats the last activity and brings the iguanas one by one before the line of initiates. The trumpeters then place the trumpet at the feet of the initiates and before the iguanas who are now kneeling in a line.

Each initiate is asked to try to blow the trumpet. Then the old men command all of them to "respect their fathers and mothers," "never to tell lies," "not to run after women who do not belong to them," "not to divulge any of the secrets of the men to the women, men who belong to a lower division of the association, or uninitiated boys," and all in all to live up to the tribal code.

852 535 113 *Native Interpretation.*—Kaitjimbal (large gray kangaroo) is repeated a number of times because, said the leaders, "We have to get in all the clan countries where he has totems." This is partly a rationalization: it is true he has rangas in a great number of places; but most of the other animals which are danced are also found in a large number of clan holes, yet they are not repeated so frequently. The use of the Yiritja kangaroo in the dance sequence shows that Yiritja as well as Dua things are ritualized in the Djungguan, despite the fact that the two old women were supposed to walk only in Dua clan territory. Kaitjimbal's ranga is his tail (see Ulmark ceremony, page 317). The mokois danced are said to be Yiritja trickster souls by some of the informants, Dua souls by others, and by another group they are declared to be of both moieties. The last category is probably correct, since the mokoi's moiety depends largely upon what clan country is being sung at that time.

852 113 Yurlunggur, the trumpet, is in the "totem well at the head of the dance ground." The iguana with him are his children. "They are initiated men who have given their blood for the Djungguan ceremony," or, as it has been concretely put by the natives, "Yurlunggur is in the Mirrirmina well. We hear him roaring out and the young men stand with their heads down." "Yurlunggur is the father of these iguana. He calls to them and brings them out one at a time, and

he is calling to his yolno [black human] children for them to see him." 852 773

This section is equivalent to Yurlunggur coming out at the camp circle, Section C.

G. The Circumcision

1. The men tip their spears with human blood, pick up the two uncircumcised boys and march toward the women's camp. 852
2. The women paint themselves.
3. The dance of the wild geese.
4. The women apply magic to the boys.
5. The circumcision and treatment of the foreskin.
6. The removal of the feather.
7. The food taboos are imposed.

1. On this last day of the Djungguan the men, at the ceremonial ground, paint their stone spear heads with the ceremonial blood. The leader of one of the ceremonies explained this in the following way: "We take that blood on our spears to the women's camp and tell the women we have killed a very big python and we ran away after we had killed it, but that the snake did not really die. The camp women know then it's Wongar. They think that blood on the spear is Wongar's. If a woman asks, 'Why did you kill that snake?' we say, 'So he'll go down in the ground. We want to be sure he'll go down in the ground.'"

The men then form into a regular line (both those who have seen Yurlunggur for the first time and the older men) and, beating on their spears with their spear-throwers, march toward the women's camp, crying out, "Ka—ok!! ye! ye! Ka—ok!! ye! ye!" On the way they pick up the two uncircumcised boys and place them on the shoulders of two men, again in the way small babies are carried.

2. Meanwhile the women, instructed by the old men to paint themselves and get ready for the camp part of the ceremony, cover their faces with red ocher and their bodies with daubs of white paint. The painting is poorly done and not elaborate. It is only on this last day of the ceremony that the women are allowed to paint themselves, and it is explained that they are allowed to paint at this time only because it is the day of the circumcision and the men want them to look nice when uncircumcised boys see them. For some little time before the men arrive with the boys who are to be circumcised upon 852 302 852 535

852 (4) A small Dua bird
533 (5) Male opossum
(6) Female opossum
(7) Fire
(8) Male and female opossums

852 535 4. Dancers then come out grunting in imitation of the opossums. They have bark penises sticking erect from their belts. Some men without these appendages are female opossums. They may or may not simulate copulation.

After dancing for some few moments, the opossums bow before the chorus on their hands and knees, and the leader sings, "Gunabibi, Gunabibi!" The leader rubs each dancer's back with his hand.

The bark penises are removed and the dance is over. The python ritual is sung again. The opossums, a small kangaroo (Yiritja moiety), fire, and mandelprindi are also sung. This completes the day's ceremony. The two ritual periods—morning and evening—occur every day throughout the ceremony.

When the new moon (narlindi yurta) appears, this section of the ceremony is completed, and the next morning the men dance the last element of the sequence.

852 533 535 173 *Native Interpretation.*—The animals sung or danced are supposed to be those seen by the Wawilak women on their way north from the interior. They all belong to various clans and totem wells found specifically on the women's route and generally throughout the western and southern part of the Murngin tribe. (The totems in the east tend to center around the Djunkgao myth rather than the Wawilak.) —"Those two sisters named all those animals. As they went they said, 'By and by you will be maraiin.'" Some of the animals and plants danced, though they have totemic significance, do not have totemic emblems; but in a sense the dance itself serves to make them for the moment a totem, and the dance becomes a totemic expression, since the bodies of the dancers and maraiin express the totemic essence in the same way a totemic emblem does.

The bull roarer here, as before, is the voice of the snake, and when the women of the camp trill their answer they are the two old Wawilak sisters calling out to Yurlunggur.

852 535 173 When the various groups dance together, it is literally what it appears to be, making one people out of them. "The making of one

mob in a dance is all the same as making one people out of all those people from [by use of] the Gunabibi." 852 535

The tall headdresses of the dancers are supposed to be the snake's neck or the neck of the animal that is being danced. They are also 773 the house of the two women. The feather headdress on top of the dunce-cap arrangement is the snake's head looking over the house. And when the whole headdress is knocked off at the end of the dance, it means the house has been destroyed by the rain and swallowed by the snake. When the backs of the dancers are rubbed by the leader, it means the snake is licking them, preparatory to swallowing them.[17] The cycle of songs sung and the dance, first of the male of the species, then of the female, and finally their offspring, are symbolical of reproduction. Said one of the leaders, "Black men walk about single, and by and by catch a mate who belongs to them, and by and by children come. Macassar man walks about by himself, by and by catch his woman, and more children come out. Big kangaroo walks about single and by and by he catches a woman and by and by there are children. It is all the same for opossum, fly, and bandicoot. Snake catches a mate and by and by there are children, and it is all the same for lizard, honeybee, pigeon, and bird, and turtle and everything. Black man cuts down tree and by and by little ones come up. It is all the same. Walk about single, by and by mate, and by and by children. It is all the fault of those women. If they hadn't done wrong in their own country this would not have happened. If they had not menstruated in Mirrirmina this would not have happened. Everyone, all plants and animals, would have stayed single. But after they had done these bad things, they made this new law for everyone."

Opossum is looked upon by the Murngin as a libidinous fellow.

D. The Line of Dancing Men Surround All the Women of the Camp

1. The men carry lighted torches and in a single file dance to the border of the common camp where the women are huddled in a group. Two old women beat the ground with clubs or yam sticks. 852 535

1. After this they gather some bushes, put them in their armpits and, carrying lighted torches of paper bark, leave the men's ceremonial grounds and start dancing toward the main camp.

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[17] Cf. Djungguan, page 278.

852 Meanwhile the women, under the guidance of an old man, leave their camp, form themselves into a solid, circular mass, and sit down in the territory between the main camp and the men's ceremonial grounds. They hide under their ainmaras (mats). Two old women walk up and down in front of the other women, beating the ground with clubs or digging sticks, and telling the young women that they cannot eat certain taboo foods or they will become ill and probably die; they will have sores on their bodies and rot away and harm their clan's people as well.

With a line of men, two Yiritja water snakes (kak-a-war) appear before the women and uninitiated boys for the first time. The snakes call out in high tones, and the women answer in the same high trill [931] in which they reply to the bull roarer. The men dance in a circle around the women. All the women make presents to the men, which are turned over to the two Yiritja snakes. The gift is obligatory, under penalty of illness and possible death sent by Muit, to whom the presents are supposed to be made. The two old women walk up and down, beating the ground with their clubs, and shout.

Their words can be freely translated: "Muit, do not come out any more and swallow us, for now we are clean and no longer impure":

Wal-mi	Come out	Nin-ne	Stop there
Nin-ni-niki	Stop there	Yuk-ka norl-tur	No swallow
Na-ma-tung	Make us good (from)	Ir-rk-tun	Sickness
Nangul Dui-yung-ur	(from) Blood sickness		
Mar-yalng-nao	We can live good	Mar-tjin-naerao	We can be healthy (no sick trouble)

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Native Interpretation.—The line of men which dances around the women huddled under the mats is the snake, and is also the two Wawilak women. The symbolic significance of the various men changes during the dance.—"When the men come out into the camp they are the two old Wawilak women at first. Then two Yiritja men at the side call out and then the line of dancers changes to proper

men. When they go around the women they are snakes. The two old 852
women who beat the ground are those two old Wawilak women who 535
beat the ground when Yurlunggur tried to swallow them. They are 773
beating Muit. They tell those young people they can't eat every kind
of food or they will get sick and maybe die and they will have sores on their bodies and rot away. The old women walk up and down and say, 'Muit, don't you come out any more and swallow these people. We are good people, we are clean.'"

Other accounts say that when the men come out of the ceremonial grounds in a line and dance toward the group of women they are the snake who has smelled the blood of the two old women because "They are painted in that blood [meaning they have the blood from a man's arm, which is the symbolical menstrual blood of the Wawilak women]. They paint their noses and over their eyes; when the snake swallowed the women he bit them and the blood came. This makes them Wongar women too."

"The snake calls out to all the other snakes and they come up and 852
circle around the women. [See the Djungguan for a like inter-
pretation.] The women are in their paper-bark house. When they take 773
their mats off, that means they have stood up before the snake swal- 782
lows them. The red ocher on their faces [the women's] is blood from where that snake bit them when they were swallowed. The two Yiritja snakes who call out are the spirits of the two children of the Wawilak women. They cry out and cry out."

"The presents the women give to the two [Yiritja] snakes go inside 852
the two snakes. Those two women are inside the snake. These presents 773
are swallowed by the snake just the same as those two women were 431
swallowed by the snake before." The presents given by the women are kept by the Dua leaders of the ceremony, but not before they have been put on the snake emblem (i.e., given to Muit; see E 2 below).

E. The Yiritja Messengers Leave to Invite the Other Clans to the Ceremony 852

1. The two Yiritja snakes leave to invite the other clans to the ceremony.
2. A symbolic well is dug, which all the dancers enter after the dance sequence of Section C is repeated.
3. The messenger snakes are sent out again to announce Gunabibi, while Section D is repeated and the presents given to the snake by the women are displayed.

The man who is the wife's partner later privately again gives her presents of spears or tobacco, red ocher, and the ordinary presents that are reciprocally exchanged. She accepts the present, keeps part of it, and gives the rest to her husband. The natives, both men and women, are much more interested in the ritual of giving and taking than in the value of the presents, which is never very great. There is usually considerable joking and amusement during this dance. Although intercourse is not to be consummated between the ceremonial partners until the last night of the ceremony, and then only for ceremonial purposes, there are a considerable number of clandestine meetings between these mates before that time. This is recognized by all, even though it is not considered regular or entirely proper. 852 786 837 431

After a man has had sexual intercourse with another man's wife, the latter male comes to him and puts his sweat on the legs and arms of his wife's partner so that the one who has been with his wife won't be "sick" from it. The position taken in the sexual act differs from the customary one (see page 78) in that the woman sits on the ground on the back of her buttocks. The trunk of the body leans back and at an angle from the legs, with the hands on the ground in back of the body to support it. The man puts his legs under hers and his hands around her so that the pudenda meet in closer contact than if he lay on her. 852 786 837 833

3. For the final occasion the men and women partners are heavily painted. On this night one woman may have sexual relations with several men because there is always a lack of women in the group attending the ceremony. If a woman shows a dislike for her ceremonial partner and refuses to join him, she is told she will be ill and make her husband and ceremonial mate ill, and she is forced to comply with her husband's demand. If a man refuses, the woman sends word that Muit will make him ill, and that she too will be sick. 852 786 837 626

Native Interpretation.—The ceremonial exchange of wives and participation in ritual intercourse is thought to be absolutely obligatory on the men and women. When a man or woman objects, the older men insist, as does the partner, that the person must do this or "Muit will make him ill" and the partner will become ill too. In speaking of the ceremonial sexual exchange I was told many times, "This makes everybody clean. It makes everyone's body good until next dry season." 852 786 837 773

The oldest leader of the Gunabibi in the area, in many ways the man best-informed on this ceremony, said to me, "Those two women [the Wawilak sisters], they walked down from the Wawilak country

852 786 837 713 and they made a corroboree like this one. Two Wawilak men came up to those women and 'played' with them. 'I think, sister, we will put white feathers all over and make this one [Gunabibi] higher and more dear [valuable] than the Djungguan. We will make this one so that every man can come and play with us.' When the Wawilak men played with them, those two sisters said these words, 'We will make this corroboree more high for people to play with each other. We are Wongar women, but when people come after us they can play with their women. It is better that everybody comes with their women and all meet together at a Gunabibi and play with each other, and then nobody will start having sweethearts the rest of the time.'" This same man said, "Everybody paints himself not for nothing. We don't take this blood out of ourselves for nothing and paint ourselves with it. We don't sleep that night, and if a woman says, 'I won't go to that corroboree place with you,' the man says, 'If you don't go with me you are going to be dead.' Sometimes we kill that woman by magic, and throw spears at them if they won't do it."

852 I. The Forked Poles Are Erected

1. The ridgepole is placed on two forked poles.
2. The Yiritja snakes and the initiates are placed on it.
3. The women and children of the camp gather by it.
4. The line of men dances around the initiates and women.
5. The taking of bread by the initiates.
6. The initiated boys are taken to the ceremonial ground and their forehead bands removed.

1. The following morning, at the boundary line between the men's ceremonial ground and the general camp, two forked poles are placed in the ground about six feet apart from each other, and a thick connecting pole is placed in their forks. It is about four feet off the ground. The whole framework reproduces part of the framework of an ordinary house or platform. The pole is hung with branches from nearby trees so that the space from pole to ground is completely covered.

2. The two Yiritja snakes go first to the structure and sit down in the forks of each pole. They lean back against the forks and face each other. They cry out with the same shrill call heard in the earlier ceremonies of the Gunabibi. Since dawn the bull roarers have been sounding and the women answering from the general camp. The initiates are placed under the bushes that hang down from the ridgepole; they

852 773 *Native Interpretation.*—The forked sticks with the pole across are the house of the two women. The ritual of the women who answer the two snakes and beat the ground with their clubs parallels that of the two old women in Section D. The men in the bush are the snake. The boys who are hanging from the rafter are flying foxes. When the women move back and the men sit down in a line under the rafter, "This means one people, and the rafter is the snake and the people are Muit food.—They are all the same as the birimbir of Bapa himself. —They are Muit and they are one people." When the boys crawl from behind the line of men to one end of the line, they are brought to the tail of Muit and "They are the young snakes of that big one." When the boys crawl up to the head of the snake and receive the food from the head (the Yiritja snake sitting on the forked pole), "This means the children all want food [the children of the snake] and the snake spews out the two women and they [the children] eat it [the two women] and give it back to him [spit out the food again]."

All the above was told to me by the leaders of the Gunabibi, both during the actual portrayal of the ceremony itself and in conversations during the hours of rest between the morning and evening dances.

852 776 825 The significance of the flying fox to the Murngin is that he is a mokoi or trickster spirit of the dead who lives in the bush. He is a generally recognized symbol to all of the spirit that does not go into the water hole but goes out into the bush or the jungle or to the Morning Star Island at time of death (see Barnumbir myth, page 524). —"A flying fox is all the same as the dead spirit from the bush. It is Dua."[18]

852 J. **Ceremonial Purification**

302 783 1. The men and women paint themselves with red ocher and kangaroo fat. The neophytes are brushed with smoking ironwood branches.

[766 302 841] [18] When an uncircumcised child dies, its mother has the wings of a flying fox painted on her shoulders and the body of the fox painted on her abdomen. "This flying fox is the birimbir spirit of that dead baby. This is done for both Yiritja and Dua mothers and babies." The same painting is sometimes put on a woman when she has had her first menses. The woman is placed inside a hut and, when she wants to move, is given two yam sticks with which to turn over. The yam-stick movement is ceremonial and symbolic of the movement of the two old women who walked with the aid of a yam stick in each hand.

[783] The condition of the boys, or women who are menstruating, of the mother of a dead child, etc., is said to be djo-ak, which means ritually unclean. "If a mother or mari or yeppa sleeps close to dead baby that sweat comes out and makes the mother unclean. Women put red ocher on after this. No one can take food from these women until the bones are dug up and she is painted by her husband with flying fox."

others gather around him. His step is almost a complete reproduction 884
of a modern "buck and wing" jig step. When he has finished he takes 535
his spear-thrower and designates the next dancer by tapping one of the chorus on the shoulder with it. This individual also does a solo dance and then taps another. This continues until all the individuals in the group have danced at least once.

Native Interpretation.—The leader of the Ulmark ceremony told me, 884
"The logs are the backbone of Muit." The men who sit on it are two 535
kaitjimbal (large kangaroos who are Yiritja) and two pardi-pardi 113
(stone kangaroos who are Dua). "They dance because those two old women named them in their dance. The two old women tried to catch these kangaroos but they ran away." The two Yiritja kangaroos are called gur-warn or messengers: "They are all the same as the kakawar [Yiritja snakes] in the Gunabibi."

The women represent the Wawilak women throughout the whole dance. "The women get up and dance around like those two [Wawilak] women did before when the rain fell down. The women carry yam sticks like those two women did. They are trying to stop the rain and to stop Muit from coming out." The words "Kait-ba! kait-ba!" were supposedly used by the two Creator Sisters in the Liaalaomir clan country.

The men take off their ornaments and "clothing" and cut their hair "so that they will go very poor and skinny and look like a man gets when there is a long wet and little food. They are all the same as waiting for the dry season to come." These acts symbolize the effect of ceremonial uncleanliness on nature and man.

Concerning the solo dance, I was told: "They dance this way because those two women did that and when one sister finished dancing, she hit the other sister with a spear-thrower and this one started dancing."

B. The Ceremonial Drum, Uvar (the Great Python) Is Made

1. A large hollow log is formed into a drum and beaten with a 884
pandanus stump. 534

1. During the progress of Section A several men, including the leader or his younger brother, go into the surrounding bush and select a hollow tree, cut it down, clean it out, and remove the outer bark. The log is recut to a four- or five-foot length and carried to a small bush house that has been made for it on the men's ground. Here it is [531]
painted with snake figures, emus, and other animals, as well as plants.

884 A small pandanus palm stump is trimmed to a convenient size for a
534 beating stick. As soon as the totemic drum is made, it is carried
under a man's arm and struck with the pandanus palm stick. The
women reply from the main camp with "Kait-bal kait-bal" This is
symbolic of the beginning of an Ulmark, as the sounding of the bull
roarer is of the Gunabibi.

884 *Native Interpretation.*—The sound of the drums is the voice of Muit,
and "the women answer the same way as for Mandelprindi [in the
773 Gunabibi] only they say 'Kait-bal kait-bal' [instead of making high
trilling sounds]."—"The women calling out 'Kait-bal kait-bal' is what
they said in trying to dance and keep Muit back."

C. The Kangaroo Messengers

884 1. They visit other groups to invite them. They have two kangaroo tail emblems with them.
2. The triangular dance ground is made; the behavior of the visitors who arrive.

884 1. For several weeks the men continue dancing the "buck and wing"
jig step while the women gather palm nuts and put them in water
202 to soak out the poison. Meanwhile a few of the men make two small
emblems. One is supposed to be the tail of the large gray kangaroo, the
other the tail of the stone kangaroo.

The kangaroos are then sent away to the surrounding clans to invite them to the ceremony. When they approach a camp they cut a large club-like stick and beat it against a hollow tree. The camp people hear it and realize that Ulmark messengers have arrived to invite them to its ritual. A man from the camp goes out to meet the messengers, who say, "We have two kangaroo tails here, one Dua, one Yiritja. We have all the food ready. You must come."

884 2. While the messengers are away the men in the camp make a tri-
angular dance ground which is the same in structure, material, and
form as the Djungguan dance ground. When the visitors—men, women
302 and children—approach the camp of the clan that is giving the cere-
mony they paint themselves with red ocher. They sing the Kait-ba,
533 kait-ba refrain until they arrive in the main camp. Visitors who ar-
rive early and who have been initiated into the Ulmark are con-
ducted by the old local men to the men's dance ground, where they
884 start dancing the characteristic jig step of the Ulmark.

533 All neophytes are supposed to remain on the ceremonial grounds

and not go to the main camp until the Ulmark ceremony is over. 884
They do not dance. The women stay in the women's camp. The 533
women form themselves into groups according to their clan, and dance and sing, "Kait-ba! kait-ba!"

The men, also grouped according to clan, sing:

(1) The honeybee (Yer-pain) of the Dua moiety
(2) Small stone kangaroo (pardi-pardi)
(3) A grub found in rotten wood floating on lakes and rivers (Ka-mer-ung)
(4) A grub found in the trunk of the pandanus tree
(5) An acacia tree grub (Bar-ler-wir-lar)
(6) A grub found in the roots of the lake grass (I-nur-i)
(7) A grub found in the lily bulbs

At the end of each song cycle a call is made that is the same as the chorus refrain of the Djungguan ceremony.

Native Interpretation.—"When they [the messengers] hit the tree it 884
is like when those two women were walking and saw honeybees' nest 773
and cut down the tree,"—i.e., the tree that is beaten by the mes- 202
sengers is hollow, as was the tree which the old women cut down. The hollow tree is also beaten as a substitute for the hollow log drum.

The triangular dance ground is "all the same as the Djungguan." 884
It is called barn-ga-ga and means python's body. "The women dancing 773
are the two Wawilak sisters." The songs that the men sing when they 533
are divided into groups are "every kind of animal that the two women saw on their way down to Mirrirmina." These songs are to stop Muit and were sung by the two Wawilak women.

D. THE TORRES STRAITS PIGEON AND UVAR

1. The pigeon emblem is placed twice within the drum on the tri- 884
angular dance ground. 535

1. After the completion of the dance ground, the leader announces that the Torres Straits pigeon dance will be performed. The man who [302]
dances this dance has red ocher on his face, a white head band, dots on his body, and a red ocher surfacing from the knees to the elbows. A man brings the ceremonial drum, Uvar, and lays it down at the large end of the triangular dance ground. A small light stick is painted, and feathers are tied to one end to represent the pigeon.

The dancer lies down on the ground beside the "pigeon," crying out, "Wah! Wah!!" He picks up the pigeon, arises, and dances a short

884 distance toward the triangular ceremonial ground and sits down again.
535 While he does this the male chorus sings out the refrain of the Ulmark.
[552] The leader also calls out the taboo names of this variety of pigeon.
The dancer rises and, when he reaches the ceremonial drum, thrusts the bird emblem into the tail end of the drum as far as his arm will reach. He then dances around to the other end of the drum and pulls the pigeon out at that end. He dances up to the head of the dance ground, returns to the drum and once more pushes the pigeon emblem into the drum, this time at the head end, and pulls it out on the opposite side. The Straits Pigeon dance is repeated for several days, and occasionally weeks, before it is abandoned for the next part of the Ulmark sequence.

884 *Native Interpretation.*—(1) This means "Wongar snake came out of
773 his well and ate this Wongar pigeon all the same as the rock python snake today. He ate this pigeon before he ate those two women."

E. The Stone Spear-head Dance

884 1. Parrot-feather string is brought out of the men's baskets and is
535 placed over the ironwood stakes.

1. When the pigeon dance is over, the four kangaroo messengers, who have kept their new parrot-feather ceremonial string ornament hidden in their personal baskets until this time, bring it out and wrap it around two small slabs of ironwood which are supposed to be stone spear heads and are inserted into spear shafts. The four men then stand in a line, one behind the other; the first and the last carry the spear emblems in the crook of their elbows. They dance up to the tail of the snake ground and then across it to the head where the chorus stands, hesitate, and then go back to the tail again. This is repeated a number of times while the chorus sings out the Ulmark refrain and the
[552] leader calls out the taboo names of stone spear heads. None of the youths being initiated is allowed to see this section of the Ulmark, which is called by the taboo name of the stone spear head (Mar-ul-pul).

884 *Native Interpretation.*—The ironwood stakes symbolize stone spear
773 heads and are also associated with women, who use ironwood stakes as digging sticks. The two sisters were carrying the spear heads in their
535 baskets. They "walked around their camp at the time of the rain with a stone spear looking for the snake to hit and stop him. The two women walked in a line."—"That small sister said, 'What will we do with this one [the head of the spear in her basket]?' The older sister said, 'Take

it out and put it away.' The dance was after the women came to Mirrimina. 884
The blood has come. Those animals run away, and the rain 773
and the thunder and the lightning have started. They dance these 535
things to stop them."

F. THE HEADDRESS DANCE

1. A dance sequence consisting chiefly of tree-grub dances is performed. 884 535

1. The next dance is the feather headdress ritual (kurt kurt). The men sit down in a line on the men's dance ground. The first man has a feathered headdress in his hand, the next has none, the third has one, and so on. The men rise and go repeatedly through the same movements as in the last dance: up to the tail of the snake, across to the head, hesitate, and back to the tail again.

The dances of Section C are repeated a number of times, always using the above movements.—When a cycle of dances is repeated, the *general* order is always the same, e.g., bees, kangaroos, grubs; but the order in which several grubs, e.g., are danced may vary.

Native Interpretation.—"The totemic name of the headdresses is 884
darl-polng-ngo and its inside meaning is the Dar-pa snake." 535

Grubs are either classed as snakes or are closely associated with them. 773
"Those women danced all these things to stop the rain. The grubs are the things they danced."

At about this time in the progress of the Ulmark all the men change 884
baskets and fire drills, which temporarily ends the ceremony. All the
participants now go to their own clan's country or remain as visitors 535
until the ceremony starts again. Sometimes the preliminary portion of the Ulmark is extended through the whole dry season and the final part left until the following dry season, but ordinarily the complete performance is gone through at one season. If the ceremony is to last two seasons, the various participants repeat the dance sequences at their own clans throughout the rainy season, although because of the inclement weather and the difficulty of obtaining food, the dancing is not daily but only at intervals.

G. CERTAIN RITUAL PARAPHERNALIA ARE CONSTRUCTED 884

1. Kangaroo-tail emblems are constructed.
2. The sunken triangular dance ground is dug.
3. The women's dance ground is prepared.
4. A winding path is placed around the men's ground.

884 5. Snail shell rattles are manufactured.

6. A bark house is constructed and is painted with ceremonial designs.

1. While the group of headdress dances of Section F dances is being performed, two emblems are under construction. They are large representations of the Dua kangaroo and Yiritja kangaroo tails. [211] The smaller emblems previously mentioned function as message sticks for the kangaroos who announce the ceremony to the other tribes; these larger ones are used as emblems in the ceremony. They are brought out by the dancers who jump over each other. Yiritja jump over the Dua and Dua over the Yiritja in the same manner as our children play leap frog.

2. If the ceremony is to last two years the snake dance ground is not excavated, since it forms a part of what is considered the final portion of the Ulmark. If it is decided to complete the ceremony in one season, the Yiritja and Dua kangaroo messengers dig the dance place to a depth of a man's shoulder. It is in the center of the dance ground and well protected by heavy clumps of jungle growth. It has the same triangular shape as the snake ground in Section D and the one found in the Djungguan ceremony (which is not dug but is on the surface of the ground); but in addition it has a pathway dug to one side of the triangle. It is the python snake's body. It is supposed to face the southeast both in this ceremony and in the Djungguan. Bushes are piled in it at the head of the ground.

3. The women's dance ground is only a cleared space in the center of the general camp.

4. While the men are digging the triangular snake ground, the women, of both home and visiting clans, clear a small path which encircles the whole of the men's ceremonial grounds. (It winds and twists like the track left by a huge python.)

[337 534] 5. After the excavating has ceased, the men gather dry snail shells. These are painted with red ocher on which is dotted white clay. A half dozen of these shells are strung on one string and tied to a spear-thrower. Several of these snail-shell rattles are made.

[342 531] 6. A bark house is also built on the ceremonial grounds. The house is the same in structure as those used in the rainy season. The interior walls are painted with realistic and geometric figures (which illustrate the story of the two Wawilak sisters).

884 773 *Native Interpretation.*—The triangular and the women's dance ground are identical with the Djungguan dance places and are looked

upon as the same by the natives. "Those bushes are put around a hole 884
just the same as in the Djungguan. The two camps [dance grounds] 773
are just the same as in the Djungguan."—"The tail [of the triangular dance ground] goes out by the women's camp. This means he has already swallowed those two women." (In the Djungguan the triangular ground also represents the snake after he has swallowed the two women. See page 273.) "The bushes are the two women who have been spewed out by the snake. They are [also] an ant bed on the ground where that snake first fell down at Mirrirmina."

When the women dance in their camp dance ground they are those two Wawilak sisters. The winding path which is made around the men's ground, and which of course surrounds the triangular dance ground as well as the bark house, is supposed to be the track of Muit when he was surrounding the two women; and the triangular dance ground always faces southeast because "that rock place at Mirrirmina looks that way."

When the snail-shell rattles appear it means that "the two women made this at Mirrirmina, and it was to show they were tired and near
the finish of the dance." The snail-shell rattle is symbolical of marl- [534]
pin-pin (snail) itself. Its "inside meaning" is the garna, an ordinary wooden spear used by the women to stick in holes when looking for snails.

The bark house is that made by the two women when they tried to avoid the rain and being swallowed by the snake. There is supposedly a depression in the rocks and ground at Mirrirmina where the women had their house in which they put all their ritual properties during the rain. The two women left in it their hair belts and opossum string, and all the tools, weapons, and implements used by modern Murngin men. They were left for and found by the Wawilak men.

H. The Snail-shell Rattle Dance

1. The men dance with the snail-shell rattles on the boundary of the 884
   men's and women's grounds. The women give them gifts of 535
   "clothing." 431

1. The spear-throwers with the snail-shell rattles attached are brought out toward the main camp by the men. All of the male members enter the camp except the messengers, who remain in the ceremonial grounds. As they approach, the men sing and dance Flood Water. They meet the women who have marched out from their own camp and stopped on the ground intermediate to the camps. The women have gathered from

marl-pin-pin back again. When it has gone back and forth and everyone has thrown the marlpinpin, the women finally keep it. The men now dance while singing "Kait-bal kait-bal" and return to the men's ground, the women following until they reach the edge of the taboo ground. The men go inside and the women return to their camp. 884 [535]

Native Interpretation.—"The kidjin language means talk used by the two old women when they looked up into the sky and tried to stop the rain and Muit." (It is also used in fighting and hunting; a man looks at his spear and tells it to go straight. See also story of Emu and Jabiru, Appendix VIII, page 543.) 884 198 113

"Those two women are singing to stop Muit all night and to stop the raining. The young men lie down the way the children of the two women did." When the boys lie down in two lines, "They are the two women. This is how they did it before." 884 113

"When the men come toward the general camp they dance the two Wawilak women at first." That is why the line of men sing Kait-bal kait-bal, for this is the cry of the two women. When they change and make the humming sound, "This is Muit coming for the two women. That is why the camp women are singing 'Kait-bal kait-bal' now."

The men and women throw the marlpinpin at each other "because the two women did. They did it because they knew lots of rain was coming. Snail is just the same as snake. He comes out just before the rainy season. That snail ran when the women had that blood."

L. THE FIRE DANCE WITH SPEARS AND YAMS

1. A bark cylinder is made with spears at one end and yams at the other. The cylinder is fired and the men dance in the flames. 884

1. The men sing all night long. The old sequence of Ulmark songs and dances is followed through in one night. Songs are also sung by the chorus in which all the things the women saw and named on their march to the sea are enumerated. [533]

Two men leave the group and paint a bush yam with red ocher. The same men roll up pieces of paper bark into a long cylinder about one foot in diameter and about twenty feet long. Several spears are tied together and also wrapped in paper bark. It is near daylight by this time. A fire is built and the bark cylinder is placed with one end near it. At the opposite end of the bark cylinder the wrapped spears are placed. Two men sit at the fire end of the paper bark where the yam has been placed. A line of men sits down on the spears and on the paper-bark cylinder. The paper bark is lit and the men get up and 884 ~~533~~

884 535 dance over it. Dancing the Ulmark jig step, the men break up the unburned bark and feed it to the fire. Each man dances till he feels the hair burn on his legs and it is too hot for him to continue. The bark is taken off the spears and also burned.

884 535 773 *Native Interpretation.*—The bark cylinder is the snake and the men sitting in a line on it are Muit too. The bark fire is also the snake. The burning of the paper bark is Muit disappearing. The men dance over the fires "so that they must burn their legs so that they can eat any animal." They are the two Wawilak sisters when they dance this. They are "Wawilak and unclean."

M. The Frill-neck Lizard Dance

884 535 1. Two men dance frill-neck lizard in a tree and jump into a fire.

1. This same morning the frill-neck, "big-eared" lizard is danced for the first time. It is used as a symbol to announce the end of a phase of the ceremony, just as the appearance of the blue-tongued lizard was in the Gunabibi. Two men dance it. They climb up a tree and hold on with their knees while waving their arms. A fire is lit beneath them. The two lizards jump on it and then run away.

[773] *Native Interpretation.*—"When the lizards jump in the fire they are running into Mirrirmina away from the two women."

N. Flying-Fox Dance and Snake Dance

1. Two lines of flying foxes surround seated figures of kangaroos, tiger snakes, and gray kangaroos. The men enter the triangular dance ground.
2. The dance of the snakes and small kangaroos in the sunken dance ground.

1. They next dance flying foxes. The flying foxes file in to the dance ground from the bush in two long lines. On the triangular dance ground eight men sit two by two with their backs to each other. They represent black kangaroo, gray kangaroo, and darpas (tiger snakes). The two lines of flying foxes encircle each pair of sitting dancers.

2. The sitting dancers inside the circles of flying foxes shake their shoulders and fling their bodies back and forth as did the grubs in the Ulmark dance described on page 321. The kangaroos and snakes take out their feather headdresses from their baskets and place them on their heads.

The initiates are not allowed to see the rest of this part (N) of the Ulmark. All the older men get up and run to the path that has been excavated in the snake ground; they run inside the path and into the hole. 884

Native Interpretation.—"Two men [the pairs of sitting men] go straight inside the hole we dig for them. That means that the snake has swallowed the two women and is going down the hole." [773]

O. The Ceremonial Camp Is Encircled by Fire 884

1. The men dance through the fire to the women's ground. They ceremonially wash and put on new raiment. 335

1. Two men paint themselves as darpa (tiger) snakes (Ma-ring-o in the Wangurri tongue, and U-var-ko in the Garl-ba-nuk dialect). One man paints himself to represent the small kangaroo (pardi-pardi). The two snakes squat down at the head end of the triangular excavated snake ground. The kangaroos sit down at the tail end, surrounded by the chorus. Lines of bushes are put on each side of the snakes. The kangaroos dance fir[illegible] The chorus uses the swinging motion of the trunk described on page 321, and sings the taboo names of the kangaroo. After the snakes have danced, the men leave the ceremonial grounds and return to the women's camp. When the snake and kangaroo episode occurs, the neophytes are shown the excavation and instructed in the mythology for the first time. [302]

The women now make a fire that follows the path made by them earlier in the Ulmark (see Section G 4), which completely surrounds the men's ceremonial camp. The fire moves in toward the men. The women return to their own camp. The men paint themselves and all their possessions with red ocher. They shave and cut their hair to give themselves a "new" appearance. The women in camp also paint themselves and all their possessions, also to make them look "new." The men come out of their ceremonial ground and through the fire to the main camp. They dance out into the water and wash themselves, as do the women. When the men and women come back, they take kangaroo grease and red ocher and paint themselves. They put on a new white headband, freshly painted arm bands, a new hair belt, and a new pubic covering. 884 302 [291]

Native Interpretation.—"That fire is all the same as the two women made to cook the animals that ran away. [It is also the snake, and the snake's tongue.] The path is Muit." 884 773

884 All the men and women bathe themselves and wash their belongings "to make them all the same as new people and clean people." The men wash to "clean" themselves, and put on grease and ocher and new raiment to make themselves "new and clean."

P. The Forked-Pole Dance

1. Pardi-pardi runs and climbs a tree.
2. A forked pole is erected and two women climb it and jump into the arms of the men's chorus.

1. On the intermediate ground near the women's camp the small kangaroo, pardi-pardi, climbs a tree. The chorus surrounds him, dancing and calling out the cry of the two Creator Sisters.

2. While the men were dancing tiger snake and kangaroo, a large forked pole was placed in the ground. It is much the same as that used in the Gunabibi, except that here only one forked pole is used. The women, under the guidance of an old man, are collected around this pole. Two of the older women climb up and sit in the forked branches. The men leave the ceremonial grounds and surround the stick and the women. They roar like thunder. The two women jump from the forked stick into the chorus of men, singing "Kait-ba! kait-ba!" The men roar again. Two men get up into the forked pole and jump down into the chorus and the entire group of men then returns to the men's ceremonial grounds.

884
113 *Native Interpretation.*—"When pardi-pardi ran up the tree and then away, he was running away from those two women. They tried to catch him."—"That forked stick is just the same as the house of the two Wawilak women. When the two men get up in the forked stick that is like Muit's head in the sky, and the [chorus of] dancing men below is Muit's body around the house."

"When the two women jump down and dance around singing Kait-ba! kait-ba! they are fighting with the snake and it means they have been swallowed and taken below the ground. The men [chorus] roar like a snake [thunder]."

884 Q. The Spear-Thrower Feather-Headpiece Dance

1. The spear heads are rubbed with honey and red ocher. A line of dancers is formed at the excavated grounds; they hold, one a spear, the next a feather headdress, et cetera, in their hands.

1. This element of the Ulmark is performed at the ceremonial excavated ground. The men paint their spear-throwers with red ocher.

884 Honey is rubbed over the central part and the two ends are dotted with white paint. The chorus sits down in the path that leads into the excavated dance ground. The first man holds a spear-thrower, the next a feather headdress, and the next a spear-thrower, etc. The spear-thrower and the feather headdress are taboo and like totemic emblems. The initiates are not allowed to see them. The men sing under the direction of the ceremonial leader the taboo names of the two objects.

884 773 *Native Interpretation.*—The men in the path "are the two women. They dance this to stop rain because this was right inside [very sacred and high in the totemic mysteries]. They couldn't stop because Muit wouldn't stop. The kurt-kurts [feather headdresses] are darpa snakes."

R. The Flying Fox and Kangaroo Dance

1. The kangaroos sit by the excavated triangular dance ground with lines of fire on each side of them. 884
2. The flying foxes enter and go into the hole.
3. The messengers appear.

1. Following the episode above, two lines of gray kangaroos (kai-tjim-bal) are formed, one on each side of the triangular dance hole. Three groups of men sit inside with their ceremonial feather headdresses on. A line of fire is placed on each side of the dance hole. The kangaroos hop over the fire while they dance around the hole.

[533] 2. After this the group sing evening and morning star, the sun, moon, stars, and milky way. When daylight is near, everyone picks up a firebrand. Several lines of flying-fox dancers gather out in the surrounding bush. They cry out like flying foxes. They run by one another a number of times, then enter the ceremonial hole and surround each group of men there. The leader of the ceremony calls out the taboo name of the headdresses. The seated men exchange headdresses.

3. Soon after dawn messengers walk into the ceremonial camp. They are painted as Dua honeybee, darpa snake, and small kangaroo.

884 773 *Native Interpretation.*—When the kangaroos leap over the triangular well "they are swallowed by the snake." The men sitting in the well with kurt-kurts (feather headdresses) are darpa snakes. When the flying-fox dancers go into the triangular well the neophytes are made young men. "The messengers are Bapa Indi who swallowed the two women, and the other men are rain."

884 S. The Forked-pole Dance Is Repeated

1. In the camp several old men have made three or four stone fires as if they were going to cook kangaroo. The women dance out from [535] the general camp to the forked pole where the two women climb it as earlier in the ceremony. The men come out of the ceremonial ground and surround the women on the pole. They roar like the thunder. The women jump on the ground into the chorus of men and the two men climb up on the pole and then jump on the ground. A chorus of women dances outside the group of men.

Native Interpretation.—The natives' interpretation is the same as for the first performance of the dance (Section P, page 326).

884 T. The Stone Fire and Snake Dance

783 1. The old men build a stone fire and the men inhale the smoke and squat over the fire in order to allow the smoke to enter their anuses.

1. All the men go to the general camp and divide into groups around the various stone fires the old men have made. The women dance around them. All the men hold their heads over the fires and inhale the smoke and heat. They also squat over the fire to allow the smoke to enter the anal opening. Men, women, and young boys then [302] paint themselves with red ocher and kangaroo grease.

884 884 713 783 *Native Interpretation.*—When the men inhale the smoke, "this means so we can eat any kind of food." When they put their anuses over the fire, "This is like the Wawilak women did when that baby was born." The women go through this same healing and purificatory rite today. The whole fire ceremony "means just the same as the place in the Gunabibi [Section I] when men go along the ridgepole and get food handed to them."

U. The Palm Nut Bread Is Eaten

884 1. The bread is divided and eaten by the men. The ironwood-leaf purification is held and the neophytes are steamed.

783 1. Several days later, possibly a week or more, the women bake a large palm nut loaf. The ceremonial bread is divided and eaten by all the men who participated in the ceremony. Another big stone fire is made. New body ornaments are placed on each man, and green bushes are held in the hands of each mature male to symbolize the trees that surround their ceremonial ground. The men dance around

852 773 *Native Interpretation.*—"When a boy is put under an ainmara, that house is the house of the two old Wawilak women."—"Those women dancing around the ainmaras are told to do this to stop sickness and so the boy won't have trouble where he is cut."—"The couple under the ainmaras are the two Wawilak women," from the point of view of the myth and ritual.

"Marndiella was sung first by the two women before they sang the Djungguan and Gunabibi to try to stop the rain, but they couldn't stop it and the snake came and swallowed them."

D. The Dog Dancers Enter

1. Two men dance in the main camp as dogs.

852 535 1. A dog dancer comes into the dance ground of the main camp after circling about in the nearby bush and on the camp ground. He has a high peaked hat on of the same type that is used in the Gunabibi. While he comes toward the group, all the taboo names of the country belonging to the Mandelpui, Liaalaomir, and Wawilak clans are cried out by the leader and male chorus. Another dog who has on only a forehead band instead of the high hat approaches the group from another quarter. The first dog comes in and smells the feet of the boy and girl and sits down at one end of the line of men. The other dog does likewise and sits at the other end. The boy gets up then and pulls a feather from off the decorated men.

When the boy pulls the feather off it means: "Those two women had that done to them when the rain knocked the feathers off when they danced around the bark house."

Native Interpretation.—This dance "means that boy is all the same as iguana, bandicoot, opossum, and kangaroo, and that dog has come to catch him. Those two women made it that way."

E. A Line of Men Dance into the Women's Camp with Lighted Torches

1. The boy, or boys, who are to be circumcised are once more placed under the ainmara, and a line of men with torches dance around them.

[302] 1. The men then go out to the ceremonial ground and paint themselves with blood and feathers. They form a long line and dance into the women's camp carrying lighted torches of paper bark. The boy has been placed under the woman's mat and they dance around him. The leader stands by the men and sings torch fire (War-nan-bor-yo-

852 yor-o), honey (Bar-a-gar-la), and honeybee hive (Warl-kin-di). While
535 the leader sings, the chorus shrilly cries, "Ai—ai! !" Two birds who frequent the salt plains (Ta-bu-ta-bu) dance in while the chorus sings the name of these birds. The leader taps them with his singing sticks and makes them go over and sit down in the line formed by the chorus. The following dancers appear and are treated in the same way by the leader: honeybee, tiger snake (darpa), leech (djal-ng-nin), and two dogs. The hat worn by one of the dogs is knocked off.

The whole chorus then dance Dua honeybee. After this they tie bunches of leaves to their ankles and, beginning with the flying fox, the entire sequence of dances is performed again.

●[773] *Native Interpretation.*—"That line of men come in with blood and feathers on them. They are snakes and they dance around the camp of the two Wawilak women."

852 F. The Circumcision and Steaming Rites

304 1. The same dances are used for the steaming ceremony of the
783 Marndiella as in the Djungguan.

1. The boy is then circumcised. The same procedure and method of cutting are followed here as in the Djungguan (Section H), and the purificatory fire rite is performed in exactly the same manner.

Native Interpretation.—The same set of symbolical ideas operates here as in the Djungguan.

000 The next chapter turns to a consideration of the Djunkgao myth and ritual cycle, and the reader may turn immediately to the interpretative chapter if he is interested in discovering the Murngin symbolic processes.

CHAPTER X

MURNGIN TOTEMISM, II

THE DJUNKGAO CONSTELLATION

THE Djunkgao myth-ritual constellation will be treated by the same method as the Wawilak, presenting first the myths, and following them by descriptions of the ceremonies with each section named, analyzed and given its native interpretation. 000

Introduction to Myth

The Djunkgao sisters myth, not as well organized as the Wawilak sisters narrative, is but one part of a larger cycle of stories centering 773 around the movements of the ocean tides and the floods of the rainy season. The totemic emblems which many native accounts insist were brought to man by the Djunkgao sisters are in all these different narratives carried by the floods or tides either directly or by some such creature as dugong or shark. The totemic wells usually are said to have been made by the two Djunkgao sisters and the rangas put in them: the common rationalization is that they made the wells and put in either all the rangas or a certain number; and porpoise, dugong or Garrawark put in the others. Sometimes the holes made by the yam sticks which the two sisters used for walking sticks are now ranga or Narra wells. In certain clans the Yurlunggur and the Djunkgao cycles overlap, and all the creatures found associated with both configurations are in the Narra wells in the overlapping areas. Generally speaking, the western clans tend to celebrate the drama of the Wawilak with the Djungguan, Gunabibi, Ulmark and Marndiella, and the eastern are more concerned with the Narra ceremonies and the Djunkgao sisters. The myths of the two sets of sisters recount the adhesion of the different totems to each, but in native thought the eastern clans emphasize the Narra and the western clans the Wawilak in the ritual expressions of the myths. Frequently the Djunkgao story jumps from one clan territory back to another, and place is not related to time as minutely as it is in the Wawilak story. The different accounts give varying locales for certain events, but essentially the stories follow one pattern. Further, certain of the myths which appear in Appendix VIII might be included in the Djunkgao Myth by some of the clans and danced in the Narra celebration.

First the women came into the Murngin country on a raft from the south and then started walking with two yam sticks to support them on their journey. They went from the east coast northward and westward and disappeared into a hole somewhere in the little-known Gunwinggu country. On the way three important events occurred: (a) they named the clan countries and the animals found there and made the totem wells with their yam sticks; (b) the younger sister was incestuously raped by an ancestor man or men in her own moiety; and (c) the men stole their totems and they became like ordinary women. The account may vary in detail and place, but these happenings appear in all.

The three stories given below present the main essentials of the general theme and demonstrate the overlapping and minor contradictions found in the separate narratives. The location of the clan of the narrator affects considerably the subordination of certain clan names and the prominence of others.

THE DJUNKGAO MYTH

A. The Wanderings of the Sisters

When things started there was only water. Those two sisters paddled into Caledon Bay (other accounts, Blue Mud Bay) on a raft. Those two Djunkgao sisters went through the Marungun country first. (They had come from out of the sea in Blue Mud Bay.) They next went to the Darlwongo, Djarwark, Kalpu, Mukka-nai-mul-mi, Karpin, Merango, Marungun, Djirin, Gwiyula, Naladaer, Liagaomir, Ding Ding, Perango, Guria Marunga Island, Mart-a-rang-a Island, Pu-djer-i-ki, Rabuma, Milpai-wa, and then went on toward the Gunwinggu country. They went to all the Dua clan countries in the tribes of the north. They walked on the outside of Elcho Island and avoided Yiritja country, and just went to the country that did not have a name and made it Dua. They always avoided Yiritja country.

Those two women had been paddling with a canoe. They left the canoe and stuck two yam sticks in the ground where they stopped. They named that country Nu-pur-a. They started there and walked and walked. They came out at another place on the mainland and called it Tak-ar-a. They crossed Arnhem Bay and came out at the mainland near Elcho Island. They landed at Maripai. These women left the canoe there. They came on land now. They found a lot of shells there, and they named all these shells, they gave them totem names. They caught a number of fish, such as mullet and flatfish and others, and they gave them all names. 773

"Come," said the older sister, "we must go now, for the sun has gone down. We will go quickly."

They crossed the plain the other side of Elcho Island to the bush. They went to the bush and found bush food there, and other things that black people use, such as stringy bark for houses. They named all these things.

They sat down and stopped here in the bush country. They sat down on their feet, with their knees out in front, just the way women do today. That is why the women do this now. They looked around at the people there. They looked at the people; there were very few people, and different from what they are now. The women said to themselves, "What are we going to do? We have no husbands."

They had vaginas, but they were not large the way they are now. They were not large enough for sexual intercourse, but could only be used for urination. They took a small piece of wood and hit themselves on each buttock so they could make plenty of people and their vaginas would grow larger, just as they are now. They were walking at this time by the Goyder River. They had two yam sticks with them. They sat up high on their 844 heels like women do when they have children. Because of this there were plenty of people there.

These two women looked like women, but they also looked like Wongars and like our grandfathers a long, long time ago. Our grandfathers came out from the wombs of these women. They left the Goyder River country and the Arafura Sea country and went on over toward the Gunwinggu country. They went down in the ground there. Before they went they gave all the trees, stones, birds, animals, everything names. They named the mud and everything. That is why we have names for these things today. We did not name them ourselves. Wongars gave them their names. Our names belong to us. We can name ourselves, but everything else in the world has a name for it.

Before the two women came to us they made a wooden totem. One was a woman, and they made another one a small girl. They also made an iguana ranga, a parrot one, a stone ranga, and a fire ranga. They made a big Narra ceremony and put all these rangas in one place. When they did this they thought they would make all the water into land and have nothing but dry land, and they would have the turtles and fish live in dry places, but trochus shell talked to turtle and fish and to porpoise. He said, "Let us go back into the sea. We shells will keep ourselves halfway between on the beach and you people can go into the water. The fish can go out a little way. The turtle must stay out in the deep water. It is all right for him to come in and lay his eggs, but that's all."

Those two Djunkgao sisters paddled along in a canoe and there were no

773 men with them. There was a very big sea. They saw the Morning Star. They caught the Morning Star and held it in their hands.

"You go first," they said, "and we'll come behind."

This was in the night time. They were covered with the white slimy substance that is found on top of the sea water. This is just the same as the semen that the young woman had upon her when the Kalpu man had incestuous relations with her, and deposited his sperm upon her body. (See the Incestuous Rape of the Young Sister, page 338.)

The sea was red at that time and not like it is now. There was no land anywhere. Next morning they saw land and they were very glad. They said, "Oh, this is very good." They said, "Oh, this is Ma-lang-o." It was the mainland. There were no islands then, either. They kept coming on in this canoe and following the Morning Star. When the star went down the sun came out. The star came out at night and the sun came out in the daytime. Those two women followed the sun. They tried to get ahead of her. They followed the sun clear around the world. (The informant illustrated by putting his hand over a box and under it and around again.)

By and by they left their canoe and walked around looking for a good place to leave a ranga. They left their god at Malango ~~and the other~~ places where they stopped. They left another one at Marapai. They left their canoe at Marapai, too, and it became a ranga and turned to stone. They caught a lot of fish at this place and gave all of them names. They gave them both their common names and their power names. They went inside the mangrove swamp here and they found a lot of shellfish, including crab. They called him Nu-ka. This was in the Liagaomir country. After they named the shellfish they went farther into the bush, where they found bush food. They named all this bush food.

They made all the islands along the north coast. They made Elcho Island and the English Company Islands and the Crocodile Islands.

B. THE INCESTUOUS RAPE OF THE YOUNG SISTER

When those two women came to Caledon Bay the older went a little distance farther than the younger one. The wirkul (young girl) lay down under her ainmara (mat). One of the Wongar yolno who had been watching their arrival sneaked up and lay down under her ainmara and tried to copulate with her. He was uncircumcised. He attempted to penetrate inside her vagina. She jumped because he had frightened her while she slept. If he had asked her she would have complied willingly.

When the young girl jumped the Wongar man's penis came out of her vagina and he ejaculated all over her abdomen. His semen was on her body. She got up, ran down to the beach and washed herself. The older sister reprimanded this black man for doing it. He belonged to the ranga well called Mu-e-lung-gal. It belongs to the Kalpu Dua people. The name of the country is Kar-karng-na, after that paper-bark "canoe." This girl can still be seen standing by the shore, where she turned to stone when she took her bath. The people at this well also have the foreskin of a man for a ranga, and it can be seen in this country at the present time.

The Liagaomir and the Kalpu are all the same because they have this one for their ranga. It is found in both their wells. At the Yaor-yaor well of the Naladaer people on Napir's Peninsula, those two women squatted down there and a stone ranga fell out of the womb of the younger one. This stone can be seen a short distance from the well. Anyone can go touch it. That stone is bigger than a house. Women do not know it is a ranga. The stone is called the bir-ta (black stone).

C. THE DJUNKGAO SISTERS LOSE THEIR RANGAS

Those two Djunkgao sisters hid their dilly bags[1] with ranga string in them inside some bushes. They went out to look for shellfish in the mangrove jungles. Some of these old Wongar yolnos stole their dilly bags with the ranga string. These baskets were totemic emblems. They took the baskets away and burned the grass and bushes where the baskets had been so that the women could see the fire and think their camp fire had burned over and destroyed their totemic emblems. When the sisters returned they said, "It is no one's fault but ours. Our fire did it."

Each sister quarreled with the other for losing the red parrot feather string. They took their own baskets from their heads and put them on the ground. They thought about what they had done during the day and were sorry they hadn't put their maraiin baskets in a clear place. While they were sitting there thinking, they heard the sound of singing sticks inside the jungle. They knew that a ceremony was taking place. They knew that those old Wongar yolnos had stolen their baskets and the parrot string. They said to themselves, "We'll go and take it away from those men."

They ran out into the bush toward where they had heard the sound and where they thought their baskets were. They came close to the bush and saw the old men. The men were singing "Benbur benbur," and dancing. They had the string and baskets. The women fell down and hid their eyes because they didn't want to look at that ceremony. The men were dancing water at the time. "It is no good now for us to try to get those baskets. We must work hard now. We women must go get the food for the men from now on," said the big sister to the little one.

"Yes, sister," said the little one, "we can't do anything now. It's our own fault."

They went back to their camp and told all the women always to make plenty of food for the Narra time. Women do that now, The men who had stolen the ranga talked to each other. They said, "It is a good thing we took this ranga from those women, because now they can get food for us."

In the old times men used to get food for women and the women sat

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[1] Women's carrying bags: Australian-white term.

173 down on the inside and looked after the rangas. Those two old women (Djunkgao), when they first came, carried the sun. They were the leaders of the sun. It was just as though he belonged to them. They left him up when they came this way. In the beginning we had the sun, the water, and those women—nothing more. The sun was first.

Out in the bush the men thought, "We must have a fire." They burned paper bark and brush. Those men said, "We stole this from the women. We can't sell this string to the Yiritja until we have a fire. We cannot put this string back into the mud because we stole it from these women. We must keep it and sell it to other men so they can make presents to us."

THE DUA NARRA CEREMONY

796 The Dua Narra and Yiritja Narra are not so much age-grading rituals as totemic rites. They celebrate the relationship of man to his totems and are focused on the totemic emblems.

Both Dua and Yiritja Narra are divided into two parts. The first or preliminary part is called the *Duni*; the second is looked upon as the real ceremony and is far more important then the Duni. The Duni comprises sections A, B, and C of both the Dua and Yiritja Narras.

A. Preparations

1. The leader gives his consent to his younger brothers and other members of the clan to start a Narra ritual, and totemic emblems are carved and painted.
2. The Narra dance ground is made in the men's ground and the men dance on it.

1. At the beginning of the dry season the grass is too high for travel, and the lily bulbs and cycad palm nuts are not ready for harvest. It is necessary to wait until the grass can be burned and food becomes plentiful, to start a Narra ceremony. Most of the old men watch carefully for the earliest time possible to begin. The younger men are usually the ones who start preparations. Ordinarily the younger brother of the leader goes out into the bush with some of his friends and examines the trees until he finds a straight one of the proper size. He comments upon its proper appearance and says that this is a good one: "I am going to cut it down and make a ranga."

The tree is cut down, cleaned, and the refuse burned by him and his fellows. It is brought back to the vicinity of the clan camp, to a spot on the men's ceremonial grounds in the thicker part of the jungle.

The young man then goes to see his brother or whoever is leader

796 their totemic grounds to eat their food, and others eat in the main camp.—Until this time the totemic emblem has not been painted with red ocher. The leader says to the young men, "Are the rangas finished?"

The young men say, "No, we have no red parrot feathers."

The leader says, "Then we will make our ceremony the du ni way [the red ocher or simple way]. We will put paint on instead of red parrot feathers. We will paint the ranga tomorrow and leave it until next year." Even the people who have enough opossum string and opossum fur of Yiritja and red parrot feathers of Dua to decorate their totemic emblems properly must make an affirmative response to this statement of the leader. He then says, "We will wait until there is more food." Many times the duni is held just before the rain in November and December. Part of the feeling for having a duni then is because of the keen interest in ceremonies and ritual; occasion is given for another ceremony before the advent of the wet season which makes any kind of large gathering almost impossible.

Most of the people who have come from other clan countries have brought carved ranga wood with them. They show these unfinished rangas to the leader and obtain his permission to complete them and use them as part of the Narra ceremony. Some of the visitors, however, cut and make their totemic emblems after they have arrived. The first procedure is the ideal, the second is the way it often happens. After the ceremony has been repeated a number of times the leader says at this point, "We will paint our rangas now." Food is brought in to the men's camp. It is cut up and eaten while the totemic emblems are painted with red ocher. There is an insistence upon these two activities being performed at the same time. While the men are painting the rangas, the leader starts a cycle of songs: first water, then mud, et cetera.

796 *Native Interpretation.*—The preparatory sections of the Dua and Yiritja Narra rites parallel very closely the preparatory ceremonies in
173 the Wawilak constellation. The Dua rangas which are made at this time are definitely associated with the myth of the two Djunkgao women. The interpretation given by one informant, which I shall quote here, is one that is heard many times during the preparatory period. "You can't make just one ranga. You must make all the friends that belong to those two women," which means all the totemic things that were associated with the two sisters and were later made

into totems. The word "can't" is not to be taken too literally, since it would be possible, although unusual, to have but one totem made. 796 773

The decorative materials used in the construction of the totemic emblems have a symbolical significance. I was frequently told: "Red parrot feathers on a ranga are all the same as fire. That log [the original totemic wood used in the Djunkgao myth] was lighted when those two women were here, and that made that fire. That fire now is red parrot feathers."

The water the men use in painting the rangas symbolizes the spring flood water coming from the totem well; and when the natives sang mud several of my informants said, "You can sing the mud song, not because we are using mud to cover our rangas with, but it is like we are painting our rangas with mud from the totem wells." The red ocher symbolizes the wet mud of the totemic wells where the totemic rangas are buried when not in use. The totemic mud has spiritual significance.

When the tempo increases during the singing of water on the dance ground, reference is not only to the water which is running faster but to the seasonal situation, since the totemic well water runs rapidly only during the heavy rain period.

After the women have given the men food and they return to the Narra dance ground to continue their dancing, the repetition of the earlier cries is supposed to be the sound of water coming after a heavy rain; it is running down a flooded creek in the wet season and is definitely associated, I was told many times, with the totemic well water.

B. The Totems Are Displayed

1. The men shave and fashion "Van Dyke" beards. The women paint. Certain dances are performed and the totems displayed. 796 302

1. All the men shave their faces and leave a small growth of beard on the point of the chin. The leader sends white clay to the camp, and the women and uninitiated boys paint themselves there. They, as well as the men who also paint at this time, use a series of lateral bands running around the body and legs and arms. They are supposed to be iguanas and kingfishers.

The totemic emblems are danced with and shown to all the men present, who include not only the men of the moiety giving the ceremony, but both Yiritja and Dua clansmen. All the men participate 796 535

535 196 in the dancing except, possibly, the older men, who sit at the side and watch, and make comments and give advice. The dance is supposedly given by the Dua for the Yiritja people to see. The leader says to the younger men of the Yiritja, "See this one? He is your waku," or, "He is your gawel," or whatever term the young man calls the leader. The young man's kinship term for the totemic emblem is the same as the one he applies to the leader and possessor of the emblem.

196 173 *Native Interpretation.*—Shaving occurs in several parts of the ceremony, but usually as repetition of the foregoing element of the ceremony. I was told by the natives: "We shave for this Narra because Wongar people shaved when they painted their rangas and put them in the mud," which means "in the time of the Djunkgao sisters when the Wongar men took away their totemic rangas." At another performance of the Narra I was told that all men shave and leave only a little hair on their chin because, "We take this ranga out and that string and give it to the Yiritja and Dua and sometimes to kutara." It is a common rationalization that the string is traded to members of the other moieties; usually a mari gives it to his kutara. The meaning of the shaving here is syncretistically associated with the string in the sense that the hair left in the beard is thought to be like or generically the same as the totemic string.

The paint the men use is supposed to be the semen of the Wongar yolno who tried to have sexual intercourse with the younger Djunkgao sister.

C. THE RING OF WOMEN COVERED BY THEIR MATS

196 535
1. The men kingfishers come into the main camp, dance around the women and children hidden under ainmaras, and thrust their spears in among them.
2. The totemic poles are placed in the mud of the clan well.

1. The men dance painted kingfisher, holding a spear in each hand. This dance leads them out to the main camp.

The women and boys are gathered in a ring and hidden under ainmaras. The men use their spears (representing yam sticks) as canes and walk along in a line, one behind the other, while the leader sings and beats his bilmal (singing sticks). They dance around and around the circle of women and uninitiated. The leader calls out, "Where was this woman born?" and someone answers the name of her totem well. "And where was this one born?" and someone answers the name of a well close to the ocean, or that this one was born in a bush well at such and such a place, until all the women's birthplaces (totem wells) have been asked for and the answer given. The leader, as each well is named, calls out the names of the old Wongar yolno men who belonged to and are part of these totemic clan wells. 796 535

The dancers continue moving around the circle of women. The leader calls out the sacred names of the yam sticks represented by the men's spears. The men then thrust them into the circle of women, while the women wiggle their buttocks back and forth under their ainmaras.

The men dance around the women in two lines, one going one way and one the other.

After the leader has "called up" the yam stick, he follows it with the power name of ainmara. The men dance this, the women still lying under the ainmaras. The leader next calls out the power name of semen. After that he calls up the ranga marikmo for the various wells. The wells and ancestors are divided according to whether they are supposed to "belong to the ocean cycle of songs or the land cycle." The women get up. The leader changes the beat of his sticks from a slow rhythm to a kind of rapid syncopation. The women still stay in the ring.

2. This section of the ceremony now ends, unless it is decided to enter the ocean for ceremonial bathing. Instead of proceeding to the water, as is done when the ceremony is not a Duni, the men usually call out water; the crowd disperses and the people return to their various clan countries. The leader says at this time, "All you men go look for red parrots and make a big supply of feather string. By and by, after the rain, we will start again. We will wait for next time until the palm food is ready." The various wooden emblems are placed in the mud of the clan wells for later use. 796

This part of the ceremony has taken a month, perhaps two or three months, since the dances are repeated over and over on the men's totemic ground before the men go out into the main camp to perform the final rite with the women.

Native Interpretation.—The lines of men who dance into the camp to the ring of women and boys are supposed to be the crowd of Wongar yolno who came up when the old man incestuously "raped" the younger Djunkgao sister. They are also the two Djunkgao sisters 796 113●

796 with their yam sticks. The usual interpretation of this element in the ceremony is: "Those dancers come in in two groups. They are the 113 crowd of Wongar yolno who came up when that old man tried to play with that young girl. Those two crowds mean two 'lines' [Yeritja and Dua lineages]. Those two women said, 'We'll make two lines for marriage now.' When that woman got up the man got up too. She was frightened. Those two danced when they got up. They danced just the same as we dance now at the place in the Narra. Men and women dance now because of that."

The ring of women is supposed to be at the place where the Djunkgao sisters put their ainmaras down, and the dancing around them again symbolizes the unlawful sexual attack upon the Djunkgao sister. "That ring [the circle of women] means that smooth place those two Djunkgao women made before they put their ainmaras down. When that young girl went to sleep she did not know that old man was going to try to copulate with her. He tried and tried to enter her. By and by that white stuff came out and went all over that girl's body and not inside her. That is why they wash themselves. That is why we wash ourselves now. When the women paint themselves before they go in that ring the inside meaning is the semen of the two Wongar men who tried to have sexual intercourse with the young Djunkgao women."

The men's spears which are thrust into the group of women sometimes symbolize the yam sticks of the Djunkgao sister, as is demonstrated (1) by the men using them as canes, as the sisters did their yam sticks; and (2) by the leader's calling out the sacred names of the yam sticks for the spears. At the moment when the "yam stick" is thrust into the ring of women it is supposed to be symbolical of the penis of the incestuous Wongar yolno. "This old man who tried to play with that young sister was uncircumcised. He was not Yiritja and he was not Dua. The two sisters were Dua from the beginning." When it is explicitly thought of, these old Wongar yolno were neither Yiritja nor Dua, but there is an implicit feeling that they were Dua.

"They [the men who are painted as kingfishers] are painted that way, but 'inside' they dance those yolno. They dance those Wongar yolno and the two old women with their yam sticks at the same time." This statement signifies that the kingfisher dance has a twofold meaning. At some moments in the ceremony the dancers are the two sisters and at other moments the men. "Those kingfishers are also proper men the same as men now, and they are looking for food and

for sexual intercourse." This explicitly states the relationship of their 796
feeling toward modern man's activities and toward the activities of 773
the old Wongar men.

D. Sea Tides and Flood Waters Are Danced

1. The tides of the ocean and the floods are danced; certain birds and animals are included. 796

1. The following dry season word comes in from the various clan groups that they have red parrot string ready. The leader then sends out word that a Narra ceremony can be held. The messengers are decorated with red parrot feather armlets and may carry a miniature Dua totemic emblem carefully wrapped in paper bark. The ceremony can take place in either a Yiritja or a Dua camp ground, even though the performance is Dua. This statement is true with the possible exception of the Gwiyula clan; they seem to have a strong feeling that their ceremony ought to be held at their own well. Yiritja men can dance with Dua men. [202] [616]

The men and women of the various clans arrive and bring the parrot feathers or parrot feather string they have accumulated during the year. Ideally, many rangas should be made, including, in addition to the others named earlier in this chapter, fire, basket, labia minora, and the other totemic emblems that belong to the clans of the Dua moiety. The rangas that were made the year before are taken out of the mud, washed, painted with red ocher, and the parrot string put on them. The men paint their bodies and faces with red ocher. White clay is put on their bangles. It takes several days to prepare the totemic emblems properly. While the men are engaged in these preparations, the women have been industriously collecting lily bulbs, palm nuts and yams to supply the men with food for the period of the ceremony. Some of the men carry food from the various camps to the Narra ground. This dance ground is the same as the small quadrangle used in the Duni, except that the borders are made with heaped-up earth.

The first dance is spring flood water. The line of men dance back and forth, following the leader or calling out, "Ai—e!! Ai—e!!" which is the water coming down; when they turn and retrace their steps they call out, "Um—um ye," which is the tide returning. They next dance the ocean. The leader calls out, "Let! Let!" and when the dancers turn, "R-R-R-irt!! R-R-R-irt!!" the cries of the red parrot from the tree tops. 796 535

796 535 The leader again sings out, "Ai—e! ! Ai—e! !" and when the dancers turn, "Um—um ye! !" and then, "Mo-mu-tun [the roar of the sea], yam-ber-wong-a [the stir of the sea water when the wave breaks], burl-ol-lum [pools of boiling sea water following the break of the wave], ma-rai-ma-ra-yun [the wash of the waves covering the sand beach]," and finally again, "Um—um ye [the tide returned from the ocean]," and "Ben-bur [conventional ending to a song and dance sequence]."

Iguana is now danced. The leader sings out, "Gun-bor gun-bor [conventional announcement in the Dua Narra that the sacred name of a totem is to be called; it means nothing, according to the natives, but the two Djunkgao women sang it in their time], Djun-dam-a-la [the iguana], Gun-bor gun-bor man-ni-mur-a, Gun-bor gun-bor kui-pi-di [iguana power names]." The chorus of dancers moves to the back of the dance ground, and a solo dancer comes out of the crowd and dances to the front, arms raised sideward, elbows bent. He is an iguana. The red parrot, represented by one of the dancers, listens while the iguanas call out. He thinks it is a man making that noise and he is afraid.

796 535 773 *Native Interpretation.*—One of the native interpretations of the various dancing of water for the Narra ceremonies is: "We dance water for the Narra because it brought those two women on those paper-bark rafts. They pulled those rafts with yam sticks for paddles. We dance the water when it is all the same as the tide going out and then coming back again. We dance the sea making a roar, and we dance the way water does when the waves stop, and the pools of boiling sea water, and the waves coming on the sand beach when those two old women came. When those two old women got ashore they heard a parrot and went farther and found iguana and danced it and a Wongar iguana danced too. That's why we dance iguana now." The parrot cries symbolize the red parrot watching the two women walking along the beach.

796 E. THE CEREMONY AROUND THE TREE IN THE WOMEN'S CAMP

1. The women gather around a tree in their own camp. The men march in and the women run away. The sacred names of different clan wells are called out.

1. After dancing water, the men go to the main camp; they march in single file, beating their spears with their spear-throwers. They are Wongar yolno.

796 The leader replies, "We can't do that now. We must keep the string and sell it to another man so that he can make presents to us."

438 The people say, "All right, we'll do that. We'll only sell this string this time to the Yiritja people. We'll sell them to our wakus and our dués and our galles. We'll put this wood in the mud; we'll keep this string for presents."

796 *Native Interpretation.*—The fire that is carried to the main camp by
the men is supposed to represent the fire which the women thought
●773 destroyed their totemic baskets but which the Wongar men had lit
to fool the women when they stole their baskets from them.

"When the women dance around that tree and sing out when the men call, that means those two Wongar women put their yam sticks [rangas] in that tree. It's all the same ranga in the well."

"Those two Djunkgao mielks made those wells. They walk along, squat down, stick yam sticks in the ground and put rangas there. We people come from those wells today. We get our names from those wells. Those two mielk Wongars gave those names to our old marikmos. All our big names come from those wells from our marikmos. All the old marikmos were Wongar men and all the Narra wells are Wongar wells. All Dua wells were made with yam sticks and those two old mielks were walking."

The relation of the giving away of the ranga string to fire is given the following interpretation: "You must have fire before you can give away that ranga string to the Yiritja because those Wongar people did steal their rangas from the women. Those old men thought, 'We stole those rangas from those women. Are we going to sell them or are we going to put them in the mud, string and all?' Their leader said to them, 'We can't. We must keep them and sell them to another man so he can give presents to us.' After this the people said, 'All right, we'll do that. This will cut out the guratu [relationship] lines, and we'll sell this ranga to the Yiritja. We'll put the wood in the mud and give them the string.' We shave for this too."

"We never give that ranga wood away. It is sent back to the well. If a man gave it away his people would kill the man he gave it to." (This is the ideal, but in reality the totemic wood is given away, although there is a feeling against it.)

The information quoted above came to me when one of the better leaders of the Narra ceremonies was describing how the ceremonies were carried out. It is almost impossible for a Murngin to describe a ceremony without dropping into the mythological reasons for doing 796 it.

773 "All those Dua wells are danced because those two women put their dilly bags and ranga string in their [large string] bags and they went out to look for shellfish and they went inside the mangrove. Those Wongar yolno they went and stole that dilly bag and yam sticks and ranga string and they took it away. Those yolno burned the grass around that basket so those two women could see that fire and think their camp fire had burned over and burned up that basket. When the two women came back they said, 'It's no one's fault but our own. Our fire did it.' Each sister quarreled with the other for the burning of the red parrot feather and string.

"They took their own baskets from their heads. They think about the way they had done before and were sorry they hadn't put their other baskets in a clean place. They heard the sound of singing sticks from inside the jungle. They knew then that Wongar yolno had stolen their baskets and ranga string. They thought first they would go and take it away from them. They ran with that basket. They came close and saw the men were singing the Narra song. They thought, 'It is no good now, we must work. We must get food for the men.' "[2]

"The meaning on that basket is when young people sneak up now and play with mielks they do that like old yolno did. We people do wrong the same way. We must clean him up the same way."

One man who had had missionary training said of this part of the ceremony, "It is just the same as the Heaven people do wrong when God say, 'no more touch that tucker[3] on that tree,' and they do anyway."

F. The Ring of Women Repeated (See Section C)

In the morning all the men shave and leave only the small "Van 796 Dyke" beards. "They shave because they are taking the string off 302 those rangas and selling it to the Yiritja." The same thing is done, however, if the string is sold to the relatives who belong to their own moiety.

After the men have shaved there may or may not be a dance, 796 usually not. All the ceremonies are put off until the next day, when 535 wallaby and kingfisher are danced. At the last dance the kingfishers enter into the main camp for the first time. They behave much as

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[2] This and the foregoing paragraph offer a conspicuous example of how the native, in attempting to explain the ritual, draws on the myth.

[3] Food: Australian-white term.

796 535 they did in the first ceremony. They walk with spears in their hands, which, at the moment, symbolizes the yam sticks of the two Djunkgao sisters. They continue until they come to the ring of women, as described in the duni or red-ocher part of the ceremony. The kingfishers also represent the modern Murngin man looking for food and sexual intercourse. In a way, too, they are Wongar yolno. After the kingfishers have performed a dance around the women they thrust the short spears among the group to symbolize the Wongar yolno's original breaking of taboo against sexual relations with women of one's own group; then they return to the men's ceremonial ground.

G. The Brush Turkey Totem Is Danced and Displayed

1. The totem emblem of a turkey is danced in the Narra ground.
2. The initiates are shown the totem.

[302] 1. Some distance back from the men's dance ground, groups of men have been painting themselves like turkeys. They represent the brush turkey totem. Fires are built all around the men just as fires are built on the plains when turkeys are hunted. The turkeys dance through the fires while an old man beats the singing sticks and leads them toward the men's dance ground. They carry the totem. One man dances a pantomime of a brush turkey out in the plains.

796 561 784 852 2. Small boys are put at the head of the dance ground and are shown the various lower age-grade types of totems by the old men (see list of totems, pages 39-51). They cannot see the ones that belong to higher age grades. After they have looked upon the totems which have been strongly taboo to them until this time, they must eat only bush food until after they are painted and have made presents to the leader. Looking at the totem serves as an initiation rite. After the boys have seen the totems, all the men dance once more to the main camp, where again the kingfisher ceremony is gone through with the women under their ainmaras.

796 773 *Native Interpretation.*—"When the turkeys come in, that means by and by the Yiritja are coming up. Those fires are built all around. This is all the same as making a fire in the plain by those Wongar men. When Wongar men built the fires those Wongar turkeys came up too and looked."

796 H. The Men and Women Bathe Ceremonially

1. All the men, women, and children enter the sea and wash themselves.

1. When this is completed the women and children all run into

the ocean, preceded by the flatfish and catfish whose songs are being 796
sung. A small bundle of paper bark is constructed. It represents a catfish. It is hit rhythmically against the ground while the groups of men dance the black goose dance.

On the seashore or river bank, according to where the ceremony is 796
being held, two men come out of the chorus of geese (Dua) and dance 535
black duck (Yiritja). The black ducks dance into the water first and stir it up. The geese (the rest of the men) follow. When the ducks enter the water they call out the names of the black duck ranga wells. All the men, women and children wash themselves. Two rings are formed out in the water.—These dances are danced only when the tide is in, for the practical reason that the dancers do not want to walk out on the long mud flats.

After they come out of the water the men dance the two fish songs again, two men at a time, chasing each other and moving back and forth across the beach.

Native Interpretation.—The men dancing catfish on their way 796
down to the water, followed by the women, are supposed to symbolize 535
the two Djunkgao women going down to the ocean after the illegal 113
intercourse of one with the yolno man. A superficial interpretation or rationalization of this behavior is that "when that catfish came out and went into the water it was all the same as those two Djunkgao mielk following the fish and trying to catch them in the ocean. It's all the same too for that flatfish. Those people are all the same as goose trying to catch that catfish."

"Duck goes into the water first, he makes the water dirty and goose follows. That black duck belong Yiritja well and he sings out the name of that well. This is all the same as in a billibong. We always [825]
see black duck go in and make the water dirty and goose comes behind." (This refers to the seasonal appearance of the black duck before the geese in the fresh-water lakes in the area.)

"When we wash, that means we're taking that semen off those women and making ourselves clean, and that means too the Narra is close up to finish. That white clay on the women means before this world only ocean, rain fall down and make foam, that makes this land. That white stuff goes from inside the bush, too, all the way to the Crocodile Islands."

"*Dua* people make rangas because Wongar yolnos and those two mielks did wrong a long time ago. It's all the same as two Dua play with each other now. It was a guratu [kinship] wrong. That Wongar

796 yolno and mielk went to swim in the sea and made themselves clean
535 and they cut out that wrong. That's why we dance the same way now to cut out that wrong."

173 The thinking here shows that both the Yiritja and the Dua use the same symbols, but the Dua identify the white paint with uncleanliness and the Yiritja identify it with foam.

796 I. THE TOTEMS ARE SHOWN TO THE YOUNG MEN

1. The lower totems are shown the youths by lines of dancing men.

884 1. The women give the men palm food so that the leader can feed
535 all the men. He informs the men that they will wait to eat until they go back inside the men's ceremonial ground. They return to the dance ground and once more take their totemic emblems out of the "bush house" or from the hollow trees used as a hiding place. All the men stick red parrot feathers on their chins with honeybees' wax. Red ocher is painted on the face. The leader says, "Are you prepared now?"

"Yes," they say.

"Are all the totemic emblems here?"

"Yes; what are we going to do now?"

"Let the young men who have beards and moustaches move."

Everything is very quiet now and there is no laughter. There must not be any laughter. A bird called a djunmal (possibly a curlew) is danced by one of the men in the Narra dance ground. He represents the tide coming in. Another bird called the ka-url-dal-por-al (a variety of the kingfisher) dances with him. The djunmal climbs a tree and the kookaburra (kingfisher) another nearby. The djunmal emits the cry of this bird, which means that the tide is coming in; the natives believe the djunmal sings just before the tide comes in. A line of old men dance forward. Their backs and necks are bowed; their eyes look down to the upturned palms of their two hands, in which they carry their totemic emblems. The kookaburra now sings that the tide is going out, when the men turn and retrace their steps. Thus the old men dance back and forth, as the tide is high and then low, high and then low, while the two birds sing alternately with the dancers' change of direction.

796 *Native Interpretation.*—The Dua Narra rangas were all brought by
173 the Djunkgao women. The Yiritja rangas have the integrating factor of the spring floods and tides. "All the Yiritja rangas were brought by the flood and tides. The big rain made that big flood."

(The beards, too, emphasize the manliness of the young men in an

age-grade sense. Their beards demonstrate their belonging to the ma- 796
ture men's age grade. The red parrot feather decoration on the 173
beards helps to ritualize this symbol of manliness.)

J. The Higher Totems Are Shown the Older Men

1. The old men leave the young men and show their higher totems 796
to each other. 535

1. Following the ceremony of showing the totems to the older 561
young men, who represent an age-grade stratum of the male division of the tribe higher than the recently initiated boys, iguana is repeated; then follows the sea-water dance which has been described, and finally iguana, with the usual conventional ending of "benbur benbur."

Only the older men see the higher rangas. The young men are left 796
and the older men go inside the bush to look at the rangas which only 561
they are allowed to see. The string is taken off all the totemic emblems 431
at this time. This string is presented to members of the opposite 616
moiety, or very frequently, as has been said before, kutara gives it to mari and mari to kutara (they are of the same moiety) as a demonstration of the solidarity of their relationship. If people who are somewhat distant, therefore a bit strange, ask for this ranga string, it arouses a considerable feeling of antagonism in the owner. It is usually said, "Have people lost their heads? Can't they think? We will just give them ordinary food later. We won't give them string." —"If they are very good friends we can give them food, but the food is not given a power name."

K. The Eating of the Sacred Bread, and Conclusion of the Ceremony 796

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1. The bread is eaten by those of near kin.
2. The string is removed from the emblems and the neophytes are 574
instructed.

1. The leader sings over the palm bread (or yams) which is put in the ashes and cooked. He calls out the totem names of the various rangas (kookaburra, banitja, etc.). This is supposed to infuse the bread with the power names of the rangas and make it "just the same as a ranga," which means that the totemic spirit resides within the bread. Only the men who understand can eat this, which means only the men who are near relations and who have been initiated.

The Murngin always eat in this way after all ceremonies. To outside tribes the people say, "This is maraiin that belongs to the Narra," 796 773 *Native Interpretation.*—The natives make a clear distinction between the Yiritja and the Dua Narra rites, but basically they are exactly the same. The formulae at the end of the songs in the Yiritja and Dua are different, and other formalized elements have slight variations; but in the fundamentals the structures of the two ceremonies are very similar, and the interpretations given are much the same. Because the two Djunkgao sisters were supposed to be Dua, there is a feeling that the Yiritja ceremony is associated with the floods and not with the women.

[535] The natives say they dance bandicoot right after water because he comes out of the bush first after the rain time, scratching small holes to look for food.

The women run away from the tree, say the natives, because the two old sisters ran in their time when the men approached them.

796 B. THE MEN DANCE WITH THE CARVED WOOD OF THE TOTEMIC EMBLEMS

1. The men shave themselves as in the Dua Narra.
2. The quail and fire dances are performed.
3. The totems are shown and the totemic bread eaten.
4. The women paint and the men go to the men's ground.

[302] 1. The men shave, leaving only the small "Van Dyke," putting heated honeybee wax on the beard and pulling it out. The leader then calls out the power name of Banitja (see list of totems, pages 34-48), one of the more important Yiritja totems:

"Bir-ka bir-ka banitja
Bir-ka bir-ka djir-lir-war-a (barrimundi)."

796 535 2. Following this song, the leader and the chorus dance quail (djerkit). The quail is supposed to be the leader for fire and is therefore the leader for shaving with hot wax. After this dance the people become inquisitive and want to know what will be next. "What will we do?" they say. "Shall we tie our opossum string to our totemic emblems? What will we do?"

The leader says, "No, we will leave them."

796 533 3. While the totemic bread is being eaten and sung over in the men's ground, the totemic emblems are painted, the same procedure gone through, and the same attitudes taken as in the Dua Narra. The leader sings the water cycle of songs, with bandicoot taking the prominent lead. A totemic well next is sung, then mud and man-

796 made by barrimundi. The leader sings out the names of their totemic
535 wells. He calls out first water and then a bangle made from the grass surrounding the well. When the bangle is called out, all the women get up at one time. All the people then go into the ocean by clans as the men call out water. The bathing ceremony can be postponed until the next year. The men and women return to their separate camps.

796 2. All the visitors put their totemic emblems in the mud of the totemic wells so that the women and uninitiated cannot see them; they all then leave for their homes. The leader appoints a man to see that all the rangas are properly taken care of and are not disturbed. The Duni is over. During the Duni a true Narra ceremonial ground is not constructed. This has a formal outline and is made only for the larger Narra ceremony.

796 *Native Interpretation.*—Although the same general outline is followed in this part of the Yiritja ceremony as in the Dua, the inter-
713 pretations are not directly connected with the myth of the Djunkgao sisters, but are associated with Yiritja creatures, such as garrawark and other totems of this moiety, who have mythological stories attached to them. These myths have not been included with the Djunkgao myth because they fall more directly into the category of local organization stories (see Appendix VIII).

The white clay on the women, according to my informants, who were the leaders of a number of Narra ceremonies that I witnessed, means, "Before this world there was only the ocean. The rain fell down and made the foam. That made some of this land. That white stuff (foam) went from the Warumeri country to the Crocodile Islands. Garrawark, the great Yiritja totem, floated in on this and made Yiritja camps by sticking his horns in the land and splitting the ground and making wells and creeks. He named these places, too; he gave them their power names. We make our rangas from that. Dua people make their rangas because that Wongar yolno and those two sisters did wrong. It was just the same as two Dua having sexual intercourse. It was a guratu [a patrilineal line of relatives] wrong. That Wongar yolno and that small Djunkgao sister went into the ocean and swam and washed themselves and made themselves 'clean' and cut out that wrong from themselves. The Dua dance that way today and do the same thing for themselves. Our Yiritja Narra is different, but all the same." (See also page 354.)

"That fish tried to stop the water with this grass, but the water came too fast and went on. The fish was a bream [mart-bu-na] and is Yiritja." 796 173

"For Yiritja that white clay on the woman and on the men too is all the same as foam. Garrawark had that foam when he dived to make Narra wells. In the Yiritja ring when the dancers come it's all the same as a fresh-water 'tide' and pushes that bream along the ocean. This tide is fresh water from a heavy rain, that takes the bream down to the ocean."

When the people divide up into groups and everyone goes into the water according to his or her clan well, they are ducks, and "They *are diving down in their ranga well water.* Those ducks are all the same as a mate for that well. It means too they are all the same as Garrawark, because that Yiritja ranga been do that. He went down in that water and came out all the same as those people do." The washing, then, is no ordinary washing but is symbolical of being cleansed by the spiritual well water, and the act is the same as the totem's. There is a general story about the "tide" (flood) carrying the rangas down to the sea and of the sea tides pushing the flood waters back.

When the leader and his men paint the rangas and sing water it means that the water is being put on the red ocher and refers also to the original flood. When mud is sung it means: "You are not painting that ranga with mud but with red ocher, but it is like you paint him with mud and that mud is all the same as mud from the ranga well and where we put the ranga when we get through with it.

"We sing water running fast and rain coming. We start from rain. We do this because of that flood water. The water comes from the rain and runs down the creeks. We sing bandicoot first because he comes with the rain time. Bandicoot comes out and makes holes looking for food. We must sing bandicoot after water."

(The water dance in all these Narra ceremonies is supposed to be the primeval floods and tides. It has been amply interpreted before under the Dua heading.)

D. The Sea Tides and Flood Waters Are Danced

1. At the beginning of the new season new dances of the floods and tides are started. 796 202

1. When the dry season arrives again, the leader sends his son or

796 535 painted to represent whales. He then stamps his foot in front of each. As he does this the men move beneath the ainmaras. They are supposed to represent a whale diving under the sea. The men shrug their shoulders to look like the back of the whale as he goes beneath the water. The "whales" also move their hands back and forth to imitate the movement of the fins of the whale. The leader and the two whales repeat their figure of the dance a number of times. The leader then calls out the power names of the whale, wi-ma-ri and nul-lan-dji. One whale then gets up and sits on top of the other. This means that the whales are copulating. Those Wongar whales did that in the old days. (The dugong totem dance, which may be substituted for the whale, is conducted in the same way.)

Once more the leader and chorus dance slow water, keeping as silent as possible. The tide is coming in. Finally the tide is supposed to reach Truant Island. The men sing "Um-wa-um-wa." The water is coming slowly up on the beach. (A Wongar yolno is coming in on the tide. He reaches the island and startles the jungle fowl. He hears a jungle fowl sing out when he gets on shore with his paddle.)

The chorus sits down and the leader calls out:

> "Bir-ka bir-ka ka-djirk-ker-ak (the call of the jungle fowl)
> Bir-ka bir-ka bun-bung-a bun-bung-a (jungle fowl)."

The dancers move their heads slowly about, imitating the jungle fowl listening to the sound of a man or animal in the underbrush below his perch. This part of the dance is repeated a number of times.

796 535 773 *Native Interpretation.*—When the leader sings out the power name of the whale, as well as those of all the other creatures, animals, men, plants, and the general phenomena of nature, it is, say the leaders of the ceremonies, as though they were asking for something. "That Wongar whale can hear. He is all the same as the head of the clan for all those whales. If we go to the salt water and we are a long way out and a whale comes along, we can take sweat from under our arms and put our hands in the water, and we can put that water in our mouths and sing out the power names of that whale. It is just the same as if we were asking him for something. Our old Wongar mari and marikmo and gatu hear that and they go to that whale and turn him and keep us from harm. It is all the same as if we say to that Wongar whale, 'Don't hurt me.' That whale takes Warumeri dead men on his back to the Island of the Dead. Porpoise takes Dua men. We do

We do
not eat the whale because his food is not good. If one floats up on the [2-62]
seashore we use his ribs for rangas." 796

"When the dancers shrug their shoulders in the whale dance it 773 ●
means those whales [who are diving] are copulating. That's the way 535
those Wongar whales did. Dugongs do the same way too."

"That jungle fowl belonged to the Wongar yolno who owned that house. He was a true jungle fowl when he was in Wongar days."—"He was not a man at this time, but a bird."

G. The Ring-of-women Dance Is Repeated (See Sections C and F) 796

After this the leader says, "We will all go out to the main camp 535
now." When the women see them coming they gather in a circle and squat beneath their ainmaras. The men dancers walk, pulling their spear-throwers after them. They are calling out the power name of water and are supposed to be dancing it. Near the camp, they call out once more the name of water, and then the leader sings out power names of cloud, barrimundi, and the albatross. When they reach the women, two men who are albatross walk around the ring.

The leader calls out barrimundi. The chorus, who are standing, jump in the air in imitation of the barrimundi leaping out of the water, and then, while holding their spear-throwers, dance around the ring of women. The men form two lines, a flood group and a sea-tide group. While dancing around the women they pull their spear-throwers along the ground as before, to symbolize a low tide, then raise their spear-throwers, which means the tide is growing higher, until finally it has reached full water. The leader says now, "We'll awaken these women."

When the dancers come they are the same as fresh water and they push the bream out into the ocean. The leader then calls up rain water running in floods down the creeks, and he runs around the ring. He then calls out bangles and the grass from which they are made, found near the totem wells. (See the first account in the duni version, page 360.)

Native Interpretation.—"The albatross flies around and around a 796
canoe when it is out at sea or when it sees anything there on the 773
ocean."

The women are the two Djunkgao sisters but they are also bream fish, for when the bream had come a long way he lay down, using an ainmara because he was tired. When the leader says, "We'll awaken these women," the reference is to the sleep of the two Djunkgao sisters.

CHAPTER XI

AN INTERPRETATION OF MURNGIN TOTEMISM AND ITS RITUAL LOGIC

ANALYSES AND SUMMARIES OF THE RITUAL SECTIONS AND THE MYTH-SYMBOLS OF THE WAWILAK CEREMONIES

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A REVIEW of the Wawilak rituals will be presented here, but for the time being we shall postpone a summary treatment of the Narra rites. The chapter will concern itself first with a general summary of the sections of the rituals as expressions of myth-symbols, in an endeavor to determine the meaning of the rituals mythologically. These totemic phenomena will then be related to the larger society in an effort to ascertain what are their ultimate meanings in Murngin culture. Let us first consider in order the four rituals of the Wawilak myth.

Djungguan

All but the last section of the Djungguan are dramatic expressions of the myth-symbol of the snake swallowing the two women. The natives clearly recognize this, as their interpretations indicate. 852 713

In the first section—The Preliminaries—the boys who are to be circumcised are told that the Great Father Snake wants their foreskins and is calling for them. The warngaitja is erected, which is later taken away by the men who symbolize the snake. Symbols are made which are used in later sections: the snake trumpet (Yurlunggur), the decoration of the boys to be circumcised, et cetera. This section represents the entrance of the snake. There is the constantly recurring symbolic theme of the effort made by the women to stop the snake.

In the second section (B), when the dances occur around the warngaitja, it is understood that the dancers are the snake which later takes the warngaitja and the boys to the men's ground. The third section (C) explicitly states that Yurlunggur comes out and swallows the women, while in the fourth (D) the snake swallows the animals as well as the women.

The fifth section (E)—the bloodletting—is by far the most important, for here the whole of the ideology of the myth is clearly stated

852 and interpreted in the ritual, with heavy emphasis on the profanemen
•773 of the pool by the women's menstruation blood and their being swallowed by the python. The ritual power of blood is demonstrated. Th last dances on the men's ground (F) symbolize the snake swallowin the women, as in the fourth section above, and some of the plants an animals collected and named by the women run away from them int the Mirrirmina well. Some of the dances also bring in the mino theme of the moiety ceremonial antagonism, Dua animals pretending to fight Yiritja. The circumcision (G) has the snake-swallowing-the-women element, and is the fulfillment of the first section above, in which the boys are told the snake is calling for their foreskins.

The last section (H) is the one in which the initiates are finally purified and, by taking the communion of food (the sacred names of the various morsels of which they have been told), are finally made a part of the male group.

In brief, all the sections of the Djungguan except the last dramatize primarily the myth symbol of the snake swallowing the women.

Gunabibi

776 The mythological python in the Gunabibi ceremony is known as Muit. Muit is supposed to be more powerful than Yurlunggur. The old men say he is more powerful because his ceremony is greater. Muit is sometimes looked upon as the father of Yurlunggur, as the inner spirit of Yurlunggur. Generally the two are interchangeable. Most people say they are the same, though a strict Murngin philosopher, when giving the subject careful consideration, differentiates between the two pythons by associating Yurlunggur with the Djungguan rites and Muit with the Gunabibi and Ulmark.

852 The first section (A) is merely the preparation of the symbols for
773 the two elements found in opposition throughout the myth: Mandelprindi, or the snake; and the boys and dancers who are the two women. The ritual of this section is part of the general snake-swallowing-the-women symbol. In the second section (B), Mandelprindi calls, the women answer, and the initiates are taken—i.e., the snake has taken them. The third section (C) again—in the whirling of Mandelprindi, the singing of the men and the reply of the women—symbolizes the swallowing. The dance sequence here offers another major symbol—that of reproduction and fertility and the cycle of the seasons. In the fourth section (D), the line of men who surround the women symbolizes the swallowing of the two Wawilak women. The rituals while

the messengers are gone (Section E), are once again symbolic of the swallowing. 852 713

The kartdjur (F) although it indirectly symbolizes the swallowing, is more concerned with the reproductive and seasonal cycle, with the animals' departure from the women and entrance into the python's pool. The rituals (G) surrounding the Yermerlindi totemic emblems symbolize the arrival of the snake and the swallowing of the women. The ceremonial exchange of wives (H) symbolizes the reproductive and seasonal cycle.

The ceremony centered around the forked sticks and ridgepole (I) is again the swallowing symbol. A minor symbol, however, is injected in this section: the flying fox, a symbol of death. He is considered a mokoi or trickster soul, personified by the young boys who hang on the rafter of the two old women and who are spiritually dead because they are yet to be completely initiated. They take food from the snake—the line of men seated on the ground by the ridgepole; they join on to the male body of the snake by seating themselves in the row of men, which symbolizes their becoming a part of the higher age grade of men.

The final section (J) is not symbolic from the myth point of view except that the two women went through a similar performance of painting with red ocher.

Sections A through E, as well as G and I, all symbolize the snake's swallowing the women. The last section (J) is merely a ritual mechanism to relate the dancers once again in a normal way to their ordinary society and to prevent any harm coming to them from having been in touch with the sacred Gunabibi. Sections F and H, as well as, secondarily, part of C and of E, depict the cycle of fertility as expressed in reproduction, seasonal fluctuation, and periods of plenty and scarcity; and these again are directly expressed in the animals and plants starting out singly, then mating, copulating, and having offspring at wet seasons of the year. Briefly stated, the snake-swallowing-the-women symbol dominates the greater part of the Gunabibi; another major theme is introduced which is concerned with the cycle of reproduction; and minor themes of naming the plants and animals and of their running away are introduced (see final summary of the four great ceremonies below).

Ulmark

In the first section the four kangaroos' running away symbolizes the 884 713

884 animals who ran away from the women; the men who take off thei
clothes and shave represent men who are thin from going through
773 rainy season of scarcity. The snake is introduced, and the women tr
to stop him and the rain.

In the second section Uvar is made; its drumbeat is the voice of the snake; the women try to stop the snake from swallowing them.

The triangular dance ground in the third section has the same functions as that in the Djungguan and symbolizes the snake after he has swallowed the two women. In the fourth section (D), the swallowing of the Torres Straits pigeon corresponds to the snake swallowing the animals in the Djungguan dances.

The symbolism is less clear in the stone spear-head dance of Section E, but an analysis of Murngin thinking shows the stone spear head to be associated with the snake: it is the circumcision and the fighting and hunting instrument, and is associated generally with male pursuits. —The women dance to stop the snake.

In Section F the headdress or group dance shows considerable evidence that the groups are possibly classed as snakes (as caterpillars and snails explicitly are by the natives); but even though they do not specifically represent the snake, their dances again were danced by the Wawilak women in the myth to stop the snake from coming.

The ritual paraphernalia constructed in the seventh section (G), including the sunken triangular dance ground, the winding path around the men's ground, and the snail-shell rattle, are all symbolical of the snake; and the women's dance ground and ceremonial house represent the places where the Wawilak women danced and sang to prevent the snake from swallowing them. The kangaroo tail is associated with kangaroos who are the same as the Yiritja snakes in the Gunabibi.—The women have been swallowed by the snake in some of the elements of this section.

The snail-shell rattle dance (Section H) is Muit coming for the women. The dances performed in the ninth section (I) are repetitions of earlier dances in which the snake has swallowed or is about to swallow the women and animals.

The grub-dance sequence in Section J is a repetition in meaning of the grub-dance sequence in Section F, and also identifies explicitly the initiates with the two Wawilak women and their children. The dances performed while the feuds are being settled (Section K) are repetitions of the earlier ones which symbolized the Wawilak women fighting to keep the snake from swallowing them, and of those which symbolized the actual swallowing.

The spear, bark cylinder, yam, and fire dances (Section L) are Muit. The men are Wawilak women and when burned by the fire are being consumed by the snake (a cleansing ceremony).

The frilled-neck (big-eared) lizard of Section M is one of the animals who runs away from the women's impurity into the well of the snake. In Section N the flying-fox (associated as in the Gunabibi with the trickster soul of the dead) and snake dances are performed by the neophytes; their going into the well means the snake swallows them (and purifies them or makes them alive spiritually). The fire that encircles the camp in Section O is the Wawilak women's fire, but is also the snake and the snake's path around the camp. The communal bathing (immersion) in this section symbolizes Muit swallowing the women, and is supposed "to make the people clean and new."

In the forked-pole dance and gray-stone kangaroo dance of Section P the animals again are symbolized as running away from the women; but when the dancers get on the forked stick, they are Muit surrounding the house of the women. Q symbolizes the snake swallowing the women.

In Section R fire is again used as a snake symbol and swallows the kangaroos; and the initiation of the neophytes is symbolized by the kangaroo and flying-fox dancers entering the well. Section S is a repetition of the earlier forked-pole dance (P). In Section T, when in the stone-fire and snake dance the men inhale the smoke, "it means just the same as the Gunabibi when the men go along the ridgepole and get food handed to them" (see Section I, the Gunabibi, page 308).

In the last section, U, the palm-nut bread, spiritualized by virtue of being in the ritual, is eaten by the men as a communion, and they are purified with the burning and smoking leaves of the ironwood. (In the mortuary rites smoking leaves and branches are used to chase away unclean spirits of the newly dead or to remove generally any unclean thing.) This section parallels the Djungguan steaming rite.

To summarize, nine sections of the Ulmark are associated largely with the symbol of the snake swallowing the women: B, C, D, G, H, I, N, Q, R, and T. Five sections, E, F, J, K, and L enact part of the above symbol: they are concerned with the women trying to prevent the snake from swallowing them. Three—O, P, and S—are partly associated with the swallowing. Five—A, M, O, P, and S—either primarily or secondarily symbolize the animals running away from the unclean women into the well. One (U) is a communal eating ritual which symbolizes the unity of the group.

Marndiella

852 773 The Marndiella symbolism, like the ceremony itself, is unelaborated. The first section is concerned merely with preparing the boys by ceremonially dressing them like women for the important reason of identifying them with the women's social group. The bloodletting of Section B (found in full detail in the corresponding section of the Djungguan) ritualizes the profanation of the pool and the swallowing of the women by the snake. The flying-fox motif of the spiritually dead brought to life by the ritual is indirectly referred to.

The women's mat dance (Section C) identifies the initiate with the two Wawilak women, and covering him with the ainmara (woman's mat) symbolizes his place in the age grading. In this section we also find the snake swallowing the women.

The dog dance of Section D is one of the most difficult to interpret fully. The dog smelling the initiates means they are "all the same as animals and he is going to catch them." (Dog is best understood in the several myths in which he becomes a symbol of black men generally and therefore of the male group.) The significant fact here is that the boys are symbolical of ritually unclean food.

The blood-smeared, torch-bearing line of men of the fifth section, E, are snakes, and dance around the Wawilak women to symbolize swallowing them. In the last section, F, the initiates are circumcised and steamed exactly as in the Djungguan, and the same symbolism holds here.

852 884 The analyses of the four ceremonies show that in addition to the fundamental snake-swallowing-the-women symbol, the Gunabibi brings in also the reproductive cycle and seeing-and-naming-the-food-animals symbols. The Ulmark adds the animals-running-away-from-the-unclean-women symbol. The concluding segments of the Marndiella, Djungguan, and Ulmark bring in a communion, as does the Gunabibi in the flying-fox episode; the communion in the first three seems fairly separate from the general myth-symbols, but in the Gunabibi is part of the snake ideology.

182 852 884 *Summary of the Ritual Logics of the Wawilak Configuration*[1]

If we let

M stand for myth

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773 [1] This same procedure could be followed for the other sections and subsections of the myth, including the women naming the animals and the coming from the south, also the animals running away from the women.

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852
884
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B for the section of the myth in which the python swallows the women
C for ceremony
D for Djungguan
G for Gunabibi
U for Ulmark
M for Marndiella

and allow lower-case letters corresponding with upper-case letters of the sections to stand for those sections, we can say

$$M_B = C_D(a \ldots g), C_G(a \ldots e, g \ldots l), C_U(b \ldots i, p \ldots t), C_M(c, e \ldots f).$$

The ideology of the first section of the Wawilak myth (M_A)—the coming of the two sisters from the southern interior and the flight of the food animals—although latent in a great number of the sections, appears explicitly only in G(c), G(e, f) and in U(a, c, i, m, o, p). Omission of symbolical relation of certain sections to the myth is due to lack of material.

Obviously the testimony of the natives itself has manifest in its content a great amount of interpretative material which most emphatically demonstrates that the Wawilak myth is no meaningless tale concerned with a purely mythological history of the aboriginal peoples of the area; and this evidence again proves that the dances performed have a deeper significance to the natives' own consciousness than mere aesthetic expressions or religious formulae. All four of the rituals definitely are related to the fundamental Wawilak myth and have their symbolic point of reference there. Each of the dance and song elements refers to a myth-symbol found within the Wawilak dramatic story. The Wawilak myth-rituals are, speaking generally, sacred dramas in which the mysteries of life are enacted. The same is true for the Djunkgao myths and Narra rituals; but rather than confuse our thinking by dealing with too many variables at one time, we shall postpone our interpretation of the Narra rituals until we deal further with the Wawilak story. Since the Djungguan, Gunabibi, Ulmark and Marndiella are the most important rituals, and since in them the one symbol of the snake-swallowing-the-women seems to dominate all the others, the core of our problem of meaning lies here, and we shall give it our first attention.

THE WAWILAK CONFIGURATION AND THE SEASONAL CYCLE

821 773 Throughout the native interpretation in which the Wawilak myth and the four rituals are connected point by point and integrated, there is a continual association of the rain and flood with the python which gives us a clue to the wider meaning of the python symbol to the Murngin. The Murngin definitely associate the Wawilak python with the weather and seasonal change. The climatic ideas which surround the python are not latent but conscious and manifest in Murngin thinking. Here we shall examine the python as a weather symbol.

132 The outstanding general natural phenomena are the great seasonal changes which produce heavy rainfall and floods for five months, and for seven months an extremely dry season in which there is no rain and many of the streams, lakes, water holes and inlets dry up. Correlated with this cycle of rainy and dry seasons are the attendant phenomena of changing winds and clouds, greater and less heat, growth and decay of vegetation, birth and growth of the different species of animals, and the appearance of certain birds and insects and the disappearance of others. There is constant need of drastic change in the adaptation of the Murngin economics and technology to fit the constantly changing natural environment.

133 The other fundamental natural phenomenon which is always dramatically before one's eyes is the relation of the land to the ocean, tidal lakes, and rivers. The great tides pour inland for scores of miles, reaching into the flat coastal plains which stretch back to the broken and difficult highlands in the interior. The flat coast land is continuous along the Sea of Arafura and the Gulf of Carpentaria.

823 The Murngin have a most accurate knowledge of the locational, seasonal, and daily variation of the tides. Anyone who has taken a canoe trip with them along the seacoast quickly learns that this knowledge is immense in detail, well organized, and held by all the men. To the Murngin mind the flow of the tide into the Murngin land stands in opposition to the flow of the rivers, particularly at flood time during the rainy season. The reason is obvious when we realize the great heights of the incoming tide and the tremendous flow of flood water which goes to the sea during the rainy season.

133 134 The central plain which extends from thirty-five to sixty miles inland at sea level is composed of Tertiary deposits which have produced a very poor soil. Inland the altitude increases from several hundred to a thousand feet. Arnhem Land's highest point (to the west and south of the Murngin) is said to be only 1500 feet high. Because of

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132 The Wawilak myth among other things symbolizes[a] the cycle of
773 the rainy and dry seasons. Evidence will be presented to show that the
821 great python is the rainy season and that associated with this symbol

[132]

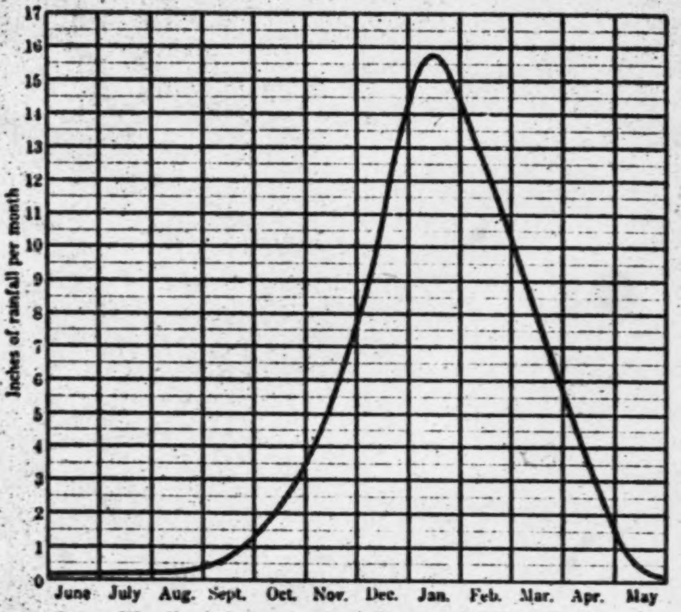

CHART XI.—RAIN CHART FOR PORT DARWIN (46-YEAR RECORD).

almost daily. They come up in a dense black bank, and travel so very rapidly that they are generally out of sight on the western horizon within 40 minutes. About an inch, or sometimes more, of heavy driving rain accompanies each storm; but in the year 1871 the writer of this article saw 2¼ inches of rain gauged within ten minutes during one of these squalls.

"During December the N.W. monsoon gradually gains the ascendancy and blows steadily, with an occasional break of calm weather. The thunderstorms disappear, the sky becomes overcast and clouded, and the atmosphere gets thoroughly saturated with moisture—so much so that leather-work becomes green with mildew; if not constantly attended to, the binding of books becomes soft; and sugar or salt, if exposed in an open vessel, will soon liquefy. This is felt to be an agreeable change after the intensely hot weather during the change of the monsoon in October and November; and, although the humid, moist atmosphere induces profuse perspiration, the effects of the weather are not nearly so unpleasant or severe as those attending the dry heat experienced in the southern portion of Australia during the same and two succeeding months.

"The N.W. monsoon is accompanied by rain almost daily, and increases in force until the latter end of January or beginning of February, when it is blowing in full heart, and penetrates with its copious and fertilizing showers into the very centre of Australia. During this period thick, damp weather prevails, the clouds being very low, and scud and banks of nimbus pass over almost constantly from the N.W. to the S.E.

132 773 821 is the belief in an original flood which covered the earth and, to the Murngin, was a prototype of the modern great floods that yearly inundate the countries of their clans and force them for their own safety into the high grounds, and at times even into the trees on the high grounds.

821 The west and northwest wind (rainy season winds) is called Barra. "Barra is Dua, it belongs to the same moiety as the snake and is sent by the snake," said the leader of one of the Dua clans to me. In other accounts it is said to be the snake. "Barra wind only brings nothing but rain and flood. After awhile that rain brings fish in the lakes and rivers and makes the grass grow up for bandicoot to eat and the tree flowers for flying-fox and opossum and plenty of fresh tucker [vegetable food] for black men. When the stringy bark comes it is Dua time."

821 805 The west wind brings grass and flood and holds until the trees flower, when the wind changes and comes from the north. Then all the people start looking for bush tucker, and, to continue with the native comment, "Dua rain and wind bring the wet season [mai-elng-nga, no-food time]. The west-wind part is first and it is the largest part."

The dry-season monsoon comes from the southeast, and for the natives northwest of those on the Gulf of Carpentaria, it is a land wind. The dry season is called Gu-tjer-a, and the southeast wind is known as Di-mur-u. "That Dimuru brings plenty tucker and yam and other bush food. There is plenty of fish in the billibongs and plenty sea birds' eggs and yams and all kinds of plums. When the plums finish the wind goes back to Barra [northwest monsoon]. The rain

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with great rapidity. The maximum temperature in the shade during the day in this weather is 96°, and the minimum during the night is 65°.

"On the approach of the autumn equinox the N.W. monsoon gradually dies away, and is succeeded by the calms, variable winds, thunderstorms, and oppressive weather until about the end of April, when cooler weather is felt; the S.E. monsoon sets in, and the dry season may be said to have fairly commenced. The wind is characterized by a clear sky, enjoyable weather, heavy dews, and cold mornings and nights—so much so that blankets can be used when sleeping. It blows off the coast without intermission, and with great force, almost throughout the season, being in full heart between June and July. At Port Darwin and other places adjacent to the coast, the monsoon generally drops in the afternoon, and is sometimes succeeded by a sea breeze, which is merely local, and only extends to a few miles inland. The atmosphere is clear and dry, and rather hot during the middle of the day—the maximum temperature in the day being 89° and the minimum during the night 56°."

[*] See social organization, technology and the various rituals which are connected with this myth.

821 776 individual and a female, is made when the totems are put into the category of natural phenomena; and since it is the nature of snakes on earth to be male and female and have young as man and all other creatures do, it is obvious to the Murngin that the totemic snakes are the same as any species. One of the clan leaders said to me, "The children are little Muits. They live here on the earth or with their father in the sky or with him in the waters down below the earth. Their children are true wirtits [actual snakes—thus the connection between the snake species and the snake totem is complete]. It is the little Muits who swallow a man or woman when they do some unclean thing such as a woman's getting into a canoe while menstruating. It is Muit who makes the rain." This account I think is less generally expressed and believed among the larger group because it is too well rationalized and bears the mark of a ritual leader and more intelligent person; yet it would be accepted by any Murngin if it were expressed to him by a leader.

821 776 825 The following would be generally known and was told to me numerous times during ceremonies or when the weather was being discussed: "The wet and dry seasons are caused by the snakes. During the wet the snakes curl up and have sexual intercourse; the Great Father Snake does the same. They then come out of the water and want to lay their eggs. This brings on the dry season so that they can have such a place. By and by this causes the heavy floods of the wet season."

821 776 773 It is believed that if, through any ritually impure act, the Wongar totem snake should be angered, he would come out and swallow the earth, and a flood would come at the same time. Several men said to me in effect what I now quote from one man: "If any Wongar snake would swallow us now the flood water would come like it did for the Wawilak sisters and cover all this land.—That snake brought the flood and the rain at the same time when he pushed the stone out of the bottom of the Mirrirmina well." Another time I was told, "When that snake took the stone from the bottom of the well the water came and the snake at the same time. He blew up to the sky for rain." Some versions say he spit water from Mirrirmina, and others say, "He spit at the same time he blew his breath."

At a moment in the Ulmark the leader said to me, "Those Wawilak women sang all night to stop Muit and stop the rain and water. They are all the same thing."

Lightning "is all the same as my brother," a Dua man said to me.

"When the lightning comes that means a light for Wongar [the 821
totemic spirit] to see by when he makes that big noise [the thunder] 776
and hits down at those people he fought [the Wawilak sisters in the
myth]. When rainbow time comes that is the snake Wongar. He is 773
swallowing those two women. When I see a rainbow or lightning I
understand rain is coming."

The cycle of the seasons with the growth and decay of vegetation, 821
copulation, birth and death of animals as well as man, is all the
fault of those two Wawilak sisters. "If they hadn't done wrong in their 773
own country and copulated with Dua Wongar men [an incestuous 776
act] and then come down to the Liaalaomir country and menstruated
and made that snake wild [angry]," this cycle would never have 812
occurred. "Everyone and all the plants and animals would have walked about by themselves." There would have been no copulation between the sexes and no children and no change. "After they had done this wrong they made it the law for everyone." One of the most intelligent men said to me, "Black men walk about single and by and by catch a mate belong him and by and by yoto [children]. White man walk about by himself, by and by catch mielk and more yoto come out. Macassar man was all the same. Big kangaroo walk about single, by and by he catch a woman and by and by yoto. All the same for opossum and fly and bandicoot and everything."

"Snake catchum mate and by and by egg and yoto. All the same for lizard and native companion and bee and turtle and everything.

"Black men cut down trees and by and by little ones come up. Everything is the same everywhere. Walk about single, by and by mate and by and by pickaninny."

This was told me during a Gunabibi as well as other times. It is almost, as far as I could see, a formula in the thinking of the Murngin.

Most of the quotations that have been given were obtained while I observed the Djungguan or Gunabibi and was being told by its leaders the "inside" meaning of each part according to Murngin thought.

The statements of the natives in these last few pages clearly indi- 821
cate that they are conscious of the symbolism by which they associate 825
the rainy season with the snake or with his actions. The snake at
this time comes out of the streams, the lakes, the springs, rivers and 773
wells, which are the sacred totem wells of the Murngin, and as he 776
raises himself the flood rises and the rain starts. He is both in the
heavens (the thunder is his voice and the lightning his tongue; the
clouds copulate and they are the snakes) and in the subterranean

821 depths. When the snake rises and swallows the women the waters
825 the earth cover the dry land, and the snake does not fall until th
773 southeastern monsoon blows. He falls and the earth is dry agai
776 "He was looking for dry land to put [regurgitate] them on." Th
rain stops, the waters recede, and the earth dries while the southeastern monsoon blows. In the myth, then, its blowing is the comin of the dry season. The snake falls and regurgitates what he has eaten as do the other snakes. The period of want when little food is available is over, for the wet season has "spit up" what it has swallowed i its waters. The women and the other animals swallowed are in thi symbolism. The reproductive and "food-giving" parts of nature are by inference—but not, so far as I could determine, in the consciousness o the Murngin—the dry season. The great primeval flood is merely a dramatic enlargement of what takes place every year when the torrential tropical rains flood the lands, cover the earth, and bring want where there was plenty.

THE WAWILAK MYTH AND RITUAL AND MURNGIN SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

821 The "swallowing" of the earth by the rainy season is known to be
825 caused by the wrong actions of the two Wawilak women in copulating
773 incestuously with their own clansmen and by the older sister's later
852 profaning the pool of the sacred python. This is not considered an unmixed calamity, however, because the rain and water bring the plants and bulbs and flowers which are consumed directly by man or provide pasturage for kangaroo, opossum, and other animals eaten by man. In other words, the Murngin see the snake's swallowing the women and animals as necessary and part of the scheme of things, and their testimony clearly demonstrates the causal relation between the actions of the Wawilak women and the seasonal cycle. The cycle of nature is a necessary one, in which man has ordinary and extraordinary rôles to play. In the ordinary rôle he "walks about single, by and by mielk, by and by yoto," as do all the other animals; and in the extraordinary rôle he is pledged by the Wawilak women to continue producing the great rituals because of their original sins and to purify man and his society. These ceremonies are designed to aid nature, or possibly it would be better to say to restrain man from preventing by his unclean actions the coming of the dry season of plenitude. This is why the young man who refuses to copulate with the woman in the fertility rite of the Gunabibi is scolded and told that he will be sick and make his partner ill. And this is why the whole

Gunabibi or any of the other ceremonies must be completed; scarcity 821
and sickness are likely to result if it is not. 825

The snake, then, in this symbolism of nature, is the wet season, and 773 ●
his actions become significant because he swallows the dry season and
regurgitates it, which brings a period of plenty. 852

A number of additional elements to this symbol are suggested by the four myths. The women are swallowed because of their unclean acts. When the various ceremonial elements are listed, the snake is found to be played almost always by the men, and the Wawilak sisters by the women, uninitiated children, and those who are being initiated.

Initiated and uninitiated meet frequently on the border line of the general camp (to which the women are ceremonially restricted) and the men's grounds. At times the men invade the ground of the women. The formal grouping of the women and children and of the initiated men is emphasized by this spatial arrangement.

In all instances the male snake (Bapa Indi, Father Big) is a ritualization of the male section of society, and the Wawilak sisters who by their uncleanness have provoked the snake (men) into swallowing them are the unritualized or profane sections of the tribe, i.e., the women and uninitiated boys. The only exceptions to this generalization occur when men take the rôle of women on the men's ground from which women are barred. This brings us, I think, to a deeper level of the great Murngin rituals. The men's age grade is a male and purifying element, and the sociological women's group is the unclean group. The male snake-group in the act of swallowing the unclean group "swallows" the initiates into the ritually pure masculine age grade, and at the same time the whole ritual purifies the whole group or tribe.

The snake is the fertilizing principle in nature according to Murngin symbolism; this explains why it is identified with the men's group rather than with the women; otherwise one would suppose that the male principle, being identified with the positive higher social values, would be associated by the Murngin with the dry season—the time of the year of high social value.

Seven institutions found in Murngin society are the elementary 61
family, the extended kinship structure, the tribe, the clan, the moiety, 771
the subsection, and the horde. The tribe and the horde are amorphous
unities which have no formal structure. The unstable elementary
family and extended kin groups are organized into larger formal
unities by the clan, moiety, and subsection systems. The totemic system

61 771 of the Murngin is highly elaborated and permeates all the activities of the group and all of its concepts of life in the world about it; but despite this proliferation of detail of totemic ideas, none of the informal structures have totemic elements as definite parts of their organization, whereas all the formal ones have them. The clan has multiple totems attached to it by authority of the various myths, and the moiety is given these same totems generally by the whole myth. For example, all Dua clans theoretically have the Wawilak totems or the Djunkgao totems according to the area in which the moiety is located. The subsections have definite totems given them, although they are of little importance to the Murngin.

601 614 616 The Murngin clan is a social category which gives spatial form to the kinship system. The ordinary kinship reciprocals can exist anywhere, since a man's father or mari could be almost anywhere in the area, and as a kinship term *mari* is not thought of spatially and in a definite locality, although one's actual father is of course identified with one's own clan. With the introduction of the clan system into the larger social order by the selection of certain lines of relatives out of the total group and the rejection of others through the use of the patrilineal unilateral principle, certain people are given a single unity with respect to the rest of the kin community and are at the same time related to a given area of land. By the inclusion of certain people and the exclusion of others from the kinship pattern, one of the chief functions of the kinship reciprocals is expressed, because the principles which exclude most of the people from one clan include these people in other clan groups and thereby create a clan system integrated into the structure of the larger kinship system. All of the people and all of the clans are related by kinship ties. The kinship system functions as an "international" social system by means of the allocation of the clans to one of two groups. This interclan organization is more simply formed than the kinship structure, and from the point of view of the moiety the segmentation into clans gives greater precision and stronger local solidarities for the people within either half of the tribe. The moiety has spatial significance only indirectly and in a derivative sense; the total territory of the clans of one moiety is its only claim to spatial character.

773 614 The Wawilak and Djunkgao myths emphasize the spatial characteristic of the clan by naming its various locations and clan wells, and by relating the wanderings of the two women through the various clan territories; further, the women's travels locate and relate the clans

in the general topography of northeastern Arnhem Land. The clan 773
structure is not a mere exogamic group which occupies a certain extended 614
territory and whose people earn their living from this area.
In the first place, all its female members are usually not attached to
the land itself, for after reaching early adolescence they go as wives
and potential mothers to other clans than their own; the wives and
mothers of the local clan come from other areas and are therefore not
thought of as belonging to this particular piece of land. Spatial unity
is disrupted and the Murngin clan is seen to be an entirely different
social entity from our modern state. Further, the economic unit of
this people is not the clan but the horde.

The horde's membership is composed of men from a number of 621
clans as well as of women from different groups. The clan composition
of a horde becomes more heterogeneous during the dry season when 614
an area can support a larger number of people, than in the rainy 423
season when food is scarce. The male membership of the clan is
seldom spatially intact except during the ritual season when all of
the male members are more likely to be present than in the rainy
period. The clan's so-called "ownership" of the land has little of the
economic about it. Friendly peoples wander over the food areas of
others and, if their area happens to be poor in food production, possibly
spend more of their lives on the territory of other clans than on
their own. Exclusive use of the group's territory by the group is not
a part of the Murngin idea of land "ownership." The ownership of
the land is more in the "nature of things," as seen by the Murngin.
The land is not outside the clan but is an integral part of it. As has
been said, it cannot be taken from the clan, for it is of the clan and
made such by the order of existence. "Wongar made it that way and
that's why we have these things today."

Politically the clan is almost impotent when it comes to positive 614
action. It is impossible to obtain group action, even for the wergild,
which will function to the extent that discipline can be enforced and 622
individual action prohibited in a blood feud. The ceremonial leader
is considered head man, and if physically able and of sufficient talent,
he is also war leader, but his power is at an absolute minimum except
as a ritual leader; it is in the field of ritual and not of government
that he exercises his leadership.

The names of the country, the names of the wells, and the list of 103
totems as well as the names of the mythological ancestors all form 614
fundamental parts of the clan unity. All of the names of the clan 773
182
778

103 wells, both the sacred and the camp names, refer to the totemic objects
614 either directly or indirectly and usually describe some aspect of the
clan's country or rationalize its relation to the totem. The totemic
773 mythological ancestors generally have the same names as the well.
182 All of these elements are unified by one or more myths. These
778 myths in turn are dramatized by the various rituals enacted by the
clanspeople so that when a man is asked what totems a particular clan possesses, he ordinarily thinks of the rituals they use and the myths the rituals portray.

The names of the clan wells either elaborate the detail of the myth as it is expressed by the totem or they give distinct additions which relate other totemic myths to the well. In no case does the name of a well have no relation to the totems of the clan.

The clansmen are identified with the totemic well by the fact that
614 they come from it and are allowed to be born by the action of the
778 totemic spirit that resides within the well; they are identified with the
182 well because at death they will go back to it and because all of their
kin who have died and those living, with whom they have had all of their social relations, are or will be either in this well into which their own soul returns or in other like clan wells; and finally, their well-being and that of their fellow clansmen and of other clans are dependent upon the proper enactment of the seasonal rituals which demonstrate the mana or power of the totem. At death not only does the soul go into the well but it also enters into the totemic emblem itself and becomes a part of it.

551 The names of the living are all taken from some part of the totemic
complex and refer directly or indirectly to the totem. One exception
182 to this is the new group of Malay terms which, however, have been
771 sacralized by the real ancestors' possessing them, and which, after a
period of taboo and when the ancestors are within the totemic water holes are passed on to the living. Another exception to the rule is the group of nicknames, which are also inheritable by the living from the dead. The spiritual life of a Murngin, then, is entirely made up
771 from totemic elements, and his whole participation within that part
182 of the community which makes him a social man and separates him
from the adolescent children and women is within the totemic complex itself. (This of course is a fundamental aspect of age grading and is treated under that head.) As a male social personality, a man is part of the totem, and in all his social relations with the male part

771 182 and the profanation of the sacred pool. The general activity of nature, that is, the alternation of the seasons, is the effect of man's uncleanliness in the mythologic past and in the present, as the Djunkgao interpretations will later demonstrate. It is therefore necessary continually to cleanse the group and its individuals of all social uncleanliness. This is the function of the Narra rites and of the Garma, Marndiella, Djungguan, Gunabibi, and Ulmark.

That which organizes the two categories (the seasonal reproductive cycle of nature and the male-cleanliness female-impurity dichotomy of society) into one is the totemic symbol which can be manipulated by ritual and gives man an effective control over nature and an effective negative sanction over the members of his society. The rituals must be properly conducted yearly to keep the group and its individuals ritually clean; and in these rituals the manipulation of the sacred totem insures the proper function of the seasons, a sufficient production of food, and a continuation of the natural surroundings proper for man. Thus that which is beyond man's technology or beyond his real powers of control becomes capable of manipulation because its symbols can be controlled and manipulated by the extraordinary powers of man's rituals. At the same time the identification, in the totemic concept, of the male and female principles with the seasonal cycles gives the adult men's group the necessary power to enforce its sanctions; the providing world of nature will not function if the rules of society are flouted and man's uncleanliness contaminates nature. Hence everyone must obey. If he does not by his own volition, then he must be forced to, by restriction of his larger participation in the group (as, for example, barring him from higher age grades until he behaves himself); or by the direct sanction of clan feud; or, within the clan, by allowing the offending member to be killed by another clan. As we have said, the women's sociological group and women as physiological beings are thus subordinate to the men's group, and the Murngin age-grading system has been built on this principle. Like other Australian tribes, this peoples' "political" control might be termed a gerontocracy, but it is more than merely the rule of old men.

182 773 857 The analysis of the four myths shows that, besides the fundamental snake-swallowing-the-women symbol, the Gunabibi uses the reproductive cycle, and the Ulmark the animals-running-away-from-the-unclean-women as important motifs. The concluding acts of the Marn-

diella, Djungguan and Ulmark introduce communion rites, as does the Gunabibi, in the flying fox episode. The communion in all of the rituals except the Gunabibi seems fairly differentiated from the general symbols, but in the Gunabibi it is part of the snake idea (the initiate becomes part of the snake in the dance). 182 773 852

The animals-running-away-from-the-women myth-symbol given primary expression in a number of the Ulmark segments is also of secondary interest in the Djungguan and Gunabibi. The interpretation of the snake-swallowing-the-women symbol gives a sufficient understanding of the Wawilak myth to fit the animals-running-away symbol into its place. The animals leave the women and jump into the python's pool because the women are ritually impure. They arise from the pool and roar like snakes. The animals here are symbolically taken into the snake's totem well and made clean by their immersion, which is demonstrated by their roaring and acting like the snake. Further, they are being swallowed by the wet season. In the Gunabibi also the animals are running away from the women and are being made clean in the well. In the Ulmark the rainy season theme is made more explicit by having the men remove all their ornaments and clothing and shave to resemble men emaciated from lack of food. This occurs in the first section after the animals (kangaroos) have run away. It seems a possible hypothesis that the Djunkgao loss of the totems and the Wawilak loss of the animals are analogous and to the native mind, in general, the same thing. This was not told to me specifically of Murngin dogma by the native interpreters, but was often said generally about the Wawilak and Djunkgao myths and the behavior of the two sets of sisters.

The Gunabibi directly introduces the further theme of the reproductive cycle. In the Djungguan, Marndiella, and Ulmark it is subsumed under the general seasonal cycle, but in the Gunabibi it has a definite part of its own in the symbolization; and when the reproductive cycle does find expression in the song and dance symbols the seasonal cycle is understood to lie within it as a part of the process of reproduction. It can be said that part of the fundamental structure of the Gunabibi is the expression of reproductive activities in symbolical detail. First only the male animals dance, then only the females, then the two simulate copulation; and when the human species perform, they actually copulate ceremonially. The ceremonial aspect of copulation is emphasized by the exchange of tribal brothers' 182 773 852 831

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937

OI 17 Murngin OI 17

182 wives; repetition of ordinary profane sexual relations of spouses would
•773 lack the dramatic force of the copulation of strange mates.
852 (Incidentally, the fact that the copulation of animals is simulated
831 by male dancers and that the human symbols of reproduction actually copulate demonstrates once more how the rituals symbolically manipulate functions of nature which cannot be directly controlled, whereas the direct form of expression is exercised when possible.)

The reproductive symbol is related point by point to the seasonal symbol by the knowledge of the seasons when the animals go about not paired, but singly, and the time of year mating and reproduction take place. The reproductive cycle of mating and birth is manifest in most of the sections of the four Wawilak ceremonies, is explicitly stated in the Gunabibi symbolism, and is latent in the concept of the season's fluctuation. The emphasis of interest in natural phenomena is shifted slightly from the seasonal variation as the organizing principle of all nature's complexities to the reproductive behavior of the animals and plants, which again generalizes on all the activities of nature. In brief, the concepts of the reproductive cycle and seasonal alternation state the same generalization and are given the same symbols in the myth.

The Gunabibi, by bringing the reproductive cycle into explicit symbolical statement in a number of segments, by retaining in others the usual seasonal symbols, and by combining seasonal and reproductive symbols in still others, gives us a better understanding of the Murngin concepts of the order of natural phenomena. The fertility of the plant and animal species is seen to be in a time relationship, and this order of time is conceived as a seasonal one. This gives us a more elaborate knowledge of the general thinking which underlies the two sister myths and Murngin totemism in general. Furthermore, the Gunabibi ritual completely demonstrates the fact that the Murngin realize the necessity of sexual intercourse as part of the reproductive cycle.

182 When the Liaalaomir python says, "I see we talk a different lan-
852 guage—it is better then that we all have the same ceremonies together for we own the same maraiin," he is stating a fundamental fact of the
773 Murngin social structure. What he is saying is that the clans ("different languages") tend to break down the larger unity with their open or suppressed antagonisms, and the ceremonies and totems tend to establish unity through the underlying agency of the rituals and myths in which Yurlunggur appears.

COMPARISON OF THE WAWILAK AND DJUNKGAO CONSTELLATIONS

The western Wawilak myth tells of the wanderings from the south of the two Wongar sisters who name the animals, localities, and wells of the individual clans, as well as the countries, in their progress northward. In the eastern Djunkgao myth two sisters do exactly the same things except that they travel by water and by land. The Wawilak sisters break the fundamental rule of clan exogamy by committing incest with one of their own clansmen. The Djunkgao sisters do the same thing. The only difference in this part of the two myths is that the Wawilak adds the menstruation uncleanliness to the incest impurity. In the third and final element of both myths the ritual paraphernalia and mysteries are obtained by the men from the women and the latter admit their subordination: the Wawilak women tell the men how to conduct their rituals and give them up to the men; the Djunkgao lose their totems and therefore their rituals are stolen by the men. These two myths with their essential identity of plot have superficially elaborated their rituals into quite different patterns; fundamentally they are the same. The Narra rituals focus their attention on the individual clan wells, on their clan totems, and on the process of purifying the clan of its uncleanliness. The Wawilak rituals place their emphasis on the totems of one well, although the other wells are brought in by inference (all the snakes in the myth hold a conversation in the sky). The Wawilak rituals emphasize the ceremonial uncleanliness and the final purification of the group but with a different set of symbols from those of the Djunkgao rituals. The Narra ceremony repeats and thereby emphasizes uncleanliness and purification. The Wawilak rituals accent purification by the snake's swallowing the women, but rather explicitly symbolize profanement as a separate element in the Dua Narra kingfisher and spear dances, the center of this ritual. 773 182 796

This identification of the two myths and the fundamental sameness of the two rituals help us to obtain a deeper insight into the concepts of the Djunkgao than we could obtain if we had only the Narra rituals to analyze. The two sisters by their incestuous act lose the totems to man. This incestuous act also causes the cycle of the seasons and of reproduction. The symbol of this uncleanliness is the semen of their incestuous partners, and their purification consists of washing this impurity off their bodies. The Murngin people reenact symbolically the mythological cleansing in the ritual of the community baptism. The water cleanses them as it does in the symbol of the snake (water) 773 182 783 796

796
773 swallowing the women in the Wawilak myth. The bathers in the
Djunkgao rite must cover themselves entirely just as the Wawilak
182 women were covered by the snake (water) in the western myth.
783 After this the males are sufficiently clean to eat their ritual bread ceremonially.

In the Narra there is less definition of the various symbols than in
773 the Wawilak group of rituals, and in the Yiritja Narra even less than
796 in the Dua. In the Yiritja Narra the great floods bring the totems; the dances are basically the same as in the Dua, where there is the dance with the totems on the men's ground, the calling out of the entire list of clans of the moiety, the dancing in the ring, the use of spears, the ceremonial bathing, the later showing of totems, and the eating of communion bread. In the Yiritja there is no deviation from the fundamental pattern of the Dua Narra, but the mythology is explicitly attached to the ritual by making the foam (semen in the Dua ritual) land in the Yiritja ritual; and it is only by inference that the whole of the Yiritja Narra is seen to depend on the interpretation of the Dua Djunkgao ritual for its meaning; e.g., the ascendency of men over the women is demonstrated by calling out the names of the wells each night, which symbolizes the removal of the totems from the women.

796 Basically the totemic Narra ceremonies are, first, purification rites by which the whole group is "baptized" (and it is this element which is most emphatically accented); second, expressions of group solidarity in communal eating of purified totemic bread by the purified group; third, rites emphasizing both clan structure and rigid dual division (by showing clan totems and calling out names of clan wells, and by the division of the Narra ceremony into two—Dua and Yeritja—rituals when in reality it is but one). Of all the rituals involved in the high totemic ceremonies, the Yiritja Narra is the simplest and least elaborated in its expression and the Gunabibi and Ulmark the most proliferated and explicit.

773 The individual totems found in all the wells supposedly visited by
Wawilak and Djunkgao women are all pieces of the general mosaic of
778 the myth. For example, in the Liaalaomir where the Wawilak women visited there are the following totems: carpet snake's head, carpet snake's anus, caterpillar, carpet snake, carpet snake's neck, carpet snake's tongue (this is also lightning), an iguana, green ant, singing stick, a palm tree, ridgepole of a house, house rafters, uprights, forked stick used for house construction, sea gull, wood brought in on the

tide, porpoise, moon fish, a rock, young porpoise, morning star, bamboo spear, stone spear, spear-thrower, variety of the wild bee, boomerang and white feather string. 773 778

The same is true among the Djawark where the Djunkgao women visited; for example, there are the following totems: menstruating girl, woman's mat and apron, mature woman, young girl, clitoris, cane, yam stick, singing sticks, fire, tidal floatwood, red parrot, grub in lily pond, black ant's nest, sea gull, wood brought in on the tide, porpoise, moon fish, a rock, young porpoise, morning star, bamboo spear, stone spear, spear-thrower, variety of the wild bee, boomerang and white feather string.

Additional totems of a higher order as well as the lowest garma forms will be discussed below. (The garma are fully treated under Mortuary Rites.)

The totems are the concrete expression of the underlying concepts of society in its relation to nature and in the relation of the internal institutions to each other; and these concepts are embedded in the myths. This means that the concepts are a part of the myth and subject to its interpretation, as the natives testify when they interpret the rituals of the various myths as well as the myths themselves.

The usual native generalization is that "these two sisters brought all the ranga," but it can be demonstrated that some wells have additional totems which have separate myths. These latter totems and myths belong to the local organization and are secondary elaborations which symbolize either clan or moiety oppositions or solidarities. The separation of the local organization myths from the larger and more comprehensive ones gives us a clue to some of the subsidiary themes and smaller subdivisions found within the larger segments of the rituals associated with the Wawilak and Djungguan myths.

The shark myth of the Djirin, for example, is added to the general configuration of the Narra by having the shark dance symbolically his breaking through the land in Buckingham Bay. Only over a long period of years could one collect all the local organization myths and determine the exact place in which they all fit into the general pattern. I regret to say I did not accomplish this. In the time at my disposal, however, I did collect a sufficient number to discover their general patterns.

The garma totems are all lower than the rangas (high totems). The rangas are preponderantly connected with the myths of the two sisters, but the garma generally are not. The garma rituals are

773 associated with mortuary rites or cleansing ceremonies throughout the
778 area, but in the north and east some of them also function as curing
rituals for sickness.

The Narra and garma myths all express the fundamental idea of
773 the movement backward and forward of the tides in the spring floods
796 either in the present period or in the mythological past; the Wawilak
783 myth and ritual leave out the movement of the tide except in a minor
way, and concentrate on the flood. The essential formula of the Narra links together the sacred names of the moiety's clan water holes: the leaders shout out during an important part of the ritual in fairly exact order in a Dua Narra first only Dua clans and in a Yiritja Narra first only Yiritja clans. The moiety clan water holes are further tied together: in the Dua Narra by relating the names of the clan wells to the wanderings of the Djunkgao sisters; in the Yiritja by the actions of the various mythological creatures. That the underlying ideas of the Djunkgao myth are ceremonial uncleanliness and purification by means of the ritual is demonstrated by its following fundamental elements: (1) the women's wanderings and planting of the totems; (2) their incest and defilement; and (3) the taking of the totems by the men.

The Yiritja Narra account shows clearly that the spring flood is made not only by the rain but also by the rise of the water in the totem water holes which overflow at this time. In this ritual it seems rather an overflow of the totem well than a flood coming directly from the rain. In any case, the well water is always a strong contributing element to the flood covering the earth. The rise of the water, then, is something more than the symbolization of the flood as male and spiritual, as in the Djungguan; it is here an actual outflow of water from the sacred centers of the land, which causes the growth of new plants and animals and the refertilizing of the earth. It is the male principle fertilizing the earth. The women are covered with semen and made fertile, as is the land. The "white stuff" on the Djunkgao women was unclean and compelled purification by washing because the clansmen of old had broken the most fundamental law of the social code. The social relations needed purification and the bathing ritual resulted. The modern social organization needs purifying for past misbehaviors, particularly those of a sexual nature (see pages 78-90 for examples of sexual code infringement). It is felt that nature, inextricably organized on the pattern of man's social organization, needs purifying as man does, since both are in the same social category, and when man "keeps from being sick" he at the same time 773 keeps nature from being sick. The rituals keep both man and nature 796 well and strong and allow them to reproduce and the fertility cycle of 783 both to continue.

AN ANALYSIS OF THE RITUAL LOGIC OF MURNGIN TOTEMISM

We have now finally reached the point where we can analyze Murngin religious thought, for we have presented in detail, first, the relations of the myths to the rituals; second, the symbolization of the phenomena of nature in myth and ritual; and third, the symbolization of the social organization and its various segments in Murngin ritual. The articulation of these very complex elements of society and nature into a conceptual configuration which is Murngin totemic logic cannot be presented coherently by description alone. It will be necessary to resort to charts. 182

To delineate properly the logic of Murngin totemism, it is necessary first to examine what the ritual realities are in man's relations to the physical environment of northeastern Arnhem Land. We shall be concerned not so much with the obvious realities of the natural environment as with the social attitudes which man has in relation to the various aspects of this environment; both concepts are comprised in the single statement that nature acts on man and man acts on nature.

The technological behavior of man describes his realistic and logical 182 adjustment to his environment. Within this realm of his behavior his 821 attitudes are entirely logical, and his techniques relate him in a scientific way to nature. It will be necessary to restate a few general facts about the natural world in which the Murngin lives. This world consists of two seasons, a rainy and a dry. Man's adaptation to the former is difficult and his adaptation to the latter is comparatively simple and without effort. The total effects on man of the dry and rainy seasons, socially and physically, are felt as comparative degrees of ill-being and well-being (in behavioristic language, the effects of positive and negative stimuli.)

The Murngin definitely recognize the real relation in nature of the wet and dry seasons, and they understand that the former is necessary to produce the latter. They are also conscious of the physical as well as the social effects on man of the two seasons (see native interpretations of the two seasons and man in them, pages 378-386). The

182 Murngin express these effects socially in terms of values: the dry
season is considered good and desirable, the rainy season undesirable
821 but necessary to reproduce the benefits of the dry period.

The configuration of native thinking about the rainy season, evaluated under a feeling of comparative ill-being, includes thought of a scarcity of food, unpleasant physical surroundings, a minimum of creature comforts, small horde groupings because of food scarcity, little social activity, as well as the possibility of actual hunger, sickness, and privation, and even death from floods. These last possibilities are fairly remote but nevertheless they have occurred and are in the minds of the people as things that might happen.

The natives evaluate the dry season as one of well-being; and in the configuration of items within this general attitude are included a plenitude of foods, easy and pleasant surroundings and ample creature necessities, large horde groups, intense and enlarged social activity, and pleasant exciting behavior, such as hunting and harpooning; all of these might be summarized under things which are enjoyable and pleasant, and of a positive nature.

Control of the seasons by an adaptive mechanism is necessary if man is to survive. The technology successfully adapts man only to the periods of normal and abnormal plenitude, but it does not adjust him to the abnormal period of scarcity during a long rainy season or when nature for other reasons does not provide sufficiently. Control of nature is one of the functions of totemism, and the Murngin's totemic ideology has one of its firmest and most substantial roots in the negative and positive social evaluation of nature's effects on man's physical well-being and his social groups. The aim of this control, in the light of the above statement about the Murngin's thinking on the seasons, is to endeavor to repeat the pleasant dry period and to control the wet period and minimize its effects.

In the following charts (XII and XIII) the anatomy of Murngin totemic logic as it is expressed in the Wawilak and Djunkgao constellations is analyzed, and the general relations of myth and ritual, social organization and nature as a seasonal cycle are expressed.

Chart XII: Wawilak Totemic Logic

182 The Wawilak myth is expressed in the rituals ordinarily by the use
821 of four fundamental symbols: (1) the animals and countries are
named; (2) the animals run away into the python pool; (3) the snake
●173 swallows the women and animals; and (4) the men obtain the rituals

from the women. These underlying motifs found in the various segments of the several Wawilak rituals are expressed in the chart by the use of the arrows 1, 2, 3, and 4 which relate the myth and ritual rectangles.

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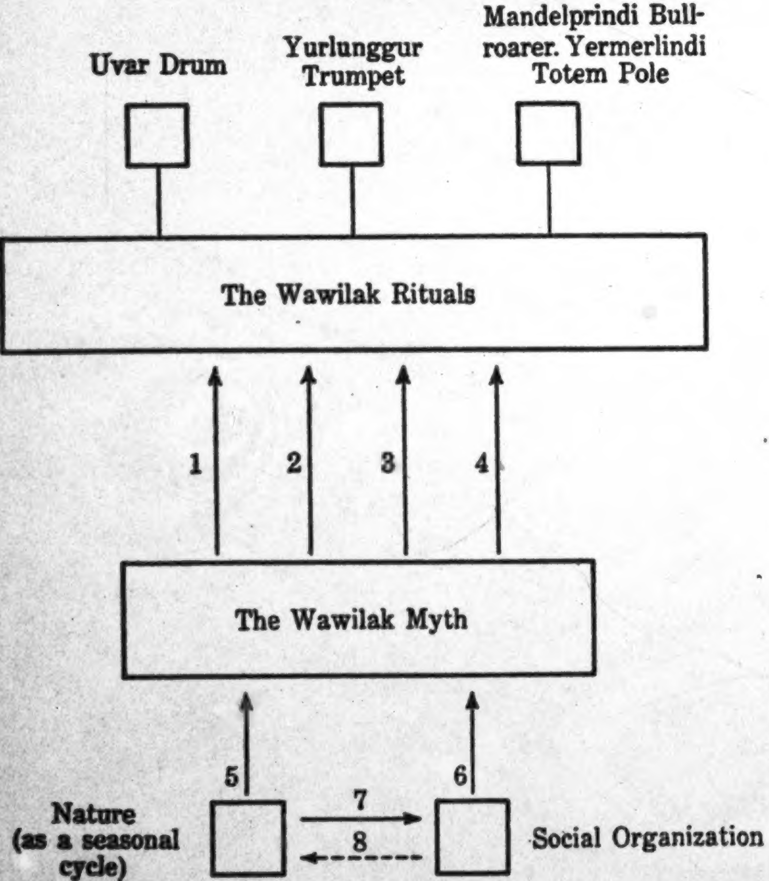
Uvar Drum
Yurlunggur Trumpet
Mandelprindi Bull-roarer. Yermerlindi Totem Pole
The Wawilak Rituals
1
2
3
4
The Wawilak Myth
5
6
Nature (as a seasonal cycle)
7
8
Social Organization

Chart XII.—Wawilak Totemic Logic

There is a direct relation between the myth and the seasonal cycles in the conception of the Murngin, directly symbolized in the myth. This relation is expressed by the arrow 5 leading from the square which is the seasonal cycle to the Wawilak myth. The social organization is also in direct relation with the myth, since it too is directly

182 symbolized by it. This relation is expressed by the arrow 6 which
joins the social organization to the myth.

821 Nature as a seasonal cycle definitely affects the activities of the social
773 organization (see Chapter V). This is expressed by the arrow 7, relating the square of the seasonal cycles with that of the social organization. Murngin logic has it that the social organization also affects the seasonal cycle (broken arrow 8), for the rituals are believed to control the wet season. There is thus established a bilateral reciprocal arrangement in the minds of the Murngin which does not exist in reality. This bilateral reciprocal relationship between nature and the social organization is possibly due to the feeling among the Murngin for the balanced reciprocals that exist in their social relations within their social organization, and nature's relations to man are thought of accordingly.

The totemic objects at the top of the chart—the Uvar drum, the Yurlunggur trumpet, the bull roarer, and the totem pole—are manipulated by the rituals to express the symbols of the myth. The myth itself is saturated with the feelings, values and ideas which give this manipulation its meaning, and these values and meanings originate in the social organization directly as expressions of its various parts. These same meanings and values may also be direct expressions of the seasonal cycle, if it is understood that this means that the Murngin conceives the seasonal cycle to be a reality. The relations between seasonal cycle and the society are real, inasmuch as the society adjusts itself technologically to nature by means of techniques, of social values, and the meanings given to nature.

The seasonal cycle and social organization are identified as one in the myth-symbols of the Wawilak myth; and the myth-symbols are expressed and the identity of seasonal cycle and social organization is concretely stated in the manipulation of the emblems and in the rituals which surround them.

All this finally can be summarized: the totemic emblems and the ritual dances and songs express the symbols of the myth; the myth gives form to the meanings, values, and ideas of the society as one in ritual logic.

Chart XIII: Djunkgao Totemic Logic

The Narra and Djunkgao logic is a repetition of the Wawilak configuration. The totemic emblems, ritual, myth, seasonal variations, and social organization have the same set of relations and are organized into an analogous pattern which functions in the same manner in the general society. The differences which exist are: (1) the Djunkgao myth varies in detail and choice of manifest symbols (the totems are different, for example), and (2) the structure of the Djunkgao myth is not as well formalized and compact as is that of the Wawilak. The myth-symbols are: (1) the movements of the tides and floods; (2) the naming of animals and country; (3) the incestuous relations; and (4) the stealing of the totems. 182 821 773

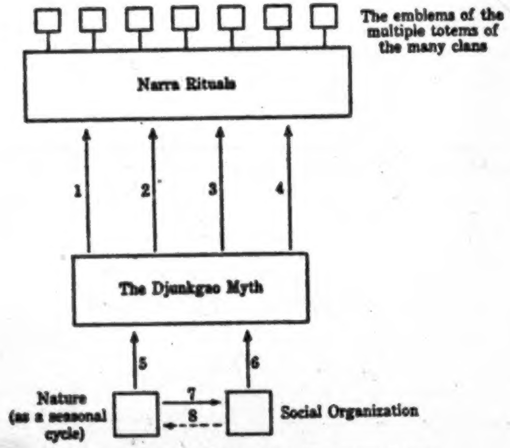
The emblems of the multiple totems of the many clans
Narra Rituals
1
2
3
4
The Djunkgao Myth
5
6
Nature (as a seasonal cycle)
7
8
Social Organization

Chart XIII.—Djunkgao Totemic Logic

It is now necessary, in our examination of the logical methods of the Murngin as expressed in the fundamental pattern of their totemism, further to break down the elements found within the configuration and to look at them in the light of thought processes. To do this I have had the good fortune to be supplied with the method worked out by C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards in their brilliant book, *The Meaning of Meaning*. Unless the reader is familiar with their technique of thought analysis it will be wise for him to read carefully the summary of their method in the accompanying footnote.[5] Let us examine Chart XIV. 121

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[5] See Ogden, C. K., and Richards, I. A., *The Meaning of Meaning* (Harcourt, Brace and Company, New York, 1927). The authors present their analysis of logical and illogical thinking in our society and the relation of language to it. They use a triangle to illustrate their thesis: the words used in the language are placed at the left-hand basal corner and related to the idea which is being expressed by a solid line running from the base to the apex. The idea is connected with the thing referred to (referent) by a

though the dugout was capable of carrying more people than its predecessor, it did not develop into a war canoe. 177 501 484

The Malays gave all the islands, beaches, bodies of water, peninsulas, and other landmarks names from their own vocabulary, which the natives learned and used in addition to their own. All the locations in the whole territory which were touched by the Malay sailors have Malay as well as native terms. Men who do not know the Malay dialect usually know the Malay place names of a particular district. 177 103

Almost all the people of the Arafura country also have Malay personal names. These names were originally given them by the Malays, but they were passed by the natives to their own relatives through the custom of giving a sister's daughter's son, or a son's son, the name of a mother's mother's brother, or a father's father; and in the female line by giving the daughter's daughter or brother's son's daughter the name of a mother's mother or father's father's sister. The Murngin know which are Malay personal and place names and which are aboriginal in origin. 177 551

There were no Malay words adopted by the blacks to describe the various social institutions of the Murngin. No clan or local group, as far as the writer could determine, received a Malay name which was used by the black. No kinship term was adopted from the Malay terms, although it might be argued that the word for father (bapa) in Murngin nomenclature, being the same as the Malay word, was taken from the intruders. When it is realized that this same word bapa figures in the more central tribes as a kinship term, and that in some of these kinship systems it means older brother and in other places describes still different relatives, it will be seen that this likeness in the two languages was probably a coincidence. It could just as easily be argued that our word "papa" was taken over by the blacks and used for their word for father, since white civilization had been in contact with aboriginal Australian culture in the south and east for a considerable period of time. A visiting Malay, had he come to the Arafura country later than the white man, might have argued this were he as uncritical as many white theorists in their arguments for the diffusion of culture traits. 177 192 601

The Malays only slightly influenced Murngin mythology. Certain myths seem to have a possible Malay origin, or, if not Malay, then some other outside source, since they do not seem to fit into the general cultural background. For instance, the belief that a man acquires the soul of the man he has killed may be due to the transportation of the head-hunting idea from Indonesia to Australia by the Malay traders. On the other hand, it is also likely that this Indonesian idea came by way of New Guinea and then down to Australia at a much earlier period than this last, Malay contact. 177 113

Certain native myths have been somewhat modified to make a place

177 773 for the Malay in the native cosmic ideology, just as the myths have been added to in order to account for the white man and his civilization; but all these changes are purely superficial and but additional facts seeded into native cosmologies.

177 764 At the end of their visits in Australia the Malays always lifted their masts, which had been taken down, and fastened them securely to the decks as part of their final preparation for departure. It is possible that there was a slight ceremony involved in this. The Murngin have taken the activities that surrounded the raising of the mast and transplanted them as a ritual into part of their burial ceremony. This has not been done by all of the clans, but is confined to only a few of the groups of the Yiritja moiety. The lifting of the mast by the Malays meant to the Murngin that they were leaving for that year, and, in a way, it symbolized their farewell to Australia in the minds of the Murngin. The idea of the departure of the Malay ship has been transferred to the idea of the departure of the soul of the dead.

The corpse is lifted in the same way as Malays were supposed to have raised their mast, and the natives chant a pidgin variety of Malay which seems to be a version of Malay chanting. When the body is raised from the ground to be taken to the grave, two men say a Malay prayer over it.—The prayer is supposed to mean, according to my native informants, that they are asking for a safe journey for the soul, that no trouble will come to it, just as the Malay, in his prayer, asked for a safe voyage for his ship. This prayer was said by the Malays, according to native ideas, during a storm and before they left for their homelands.—The natives then dance a ceremonial pulling-up of the anchor while taking the body to the grave. A mast is raised over the grave as a memorial.

All this is of particular interest to the student of symbolism and ritual, since it clearly demonstrates some of the methods by which abstract ideas are put into concrete form and the various elements of culture integrated into a single unity in the minds of the people and in their group actions.

177 776 Some of the coastal clans have added articles of Malay material culture to their list of multiple totems. Each clan has a large number of totems which are ranked according to their emotional mythological importance. The Malay totems usually belong to the garma class, which is the lowest and can be seen by women. This is not so much the direct influence of Malay culture as the inclusion of new facts into Murngin classifications. The whole of their world (animal, plant, mineral, cultural, et cetera), has been symbolized into a totemic system. It would be strange indeed if the culture did not find a place for the Malay and the contents of his culture. At present there is a tendency to substitute the white man and his civilization for the Malay in the totemic system.

144 *Malay Influence on the Racial Stock.*—It is surprising to the investigator

APPENDIX IV

DREAMS

DREAMS are always related to the extraordinary in Murngin experience. 774 They are never expressive of the ordinary round of events but are definitely placed in the category of the supernatural. It is believed that when a man 828 dreams his soul is moving about over the country away from the body and observing what is going on elsewhere. If, for example, he dreams of a fight in a distant country he believes the soul has been watching this fight in the far-distant country and reporting to his body what has happened. The various experiences that the man dreams are supposed to be those which his soul has been going through during his sleeping hours. During the hot afternoon the men frequently sleep in the shade, and if it becomes necessary to waken one of them, this is never done hurriedly but with great gentleness and care for fear that the soul will not have time to return to the body.

The soul, during these extra-corporeal experiences, is in a world where the totems, the unborn totemic children, and other extra-mundane creatures exist. The dreams in which the soul has all of its extraordinary experiences can be both beneficial and dangerous to the man or woman who dreams. Dreams by women would not fit into the general structure of Murngin [562] society, since the world of the extraordinary is largely experienced by men. There is no doubt that women dream; but the social situation which would cause dreaming in men under many conditions would not exist for women, and if there were any ritual causation of dreaming it would be of a very weak kind.

It is necessary for a man to dream before his child is born. This dream 787 is always of an extraordinary variety since the Murngin consider the child to have left its totem well and approached the father and asked him where 842 it could find its mother. It is the father who directs the child to its mother; it then enters her womb, to be carried by her until birth.

Just before or during a great ceremony such as the Narra, Djungguan, or 787 Gunabibi one or more of the participants is supposed to dream of a recently dead man who belonged to his totemic clan and who possessed the same 773 totem. The power name of the man is then given to the totemic emblem which is to be used, which means to the Murngin that there is an identification between the man and the totem. This spiritualization of the dream to the level of the sacred totemic world finds expression in the fundamental myth in Murngin social organization, namely, the story of the two Wawilak

781 sisters. After all the sacred drama had been enacted by them and they had
been swallowed by the Great Father and taken down into the holy waters
173 in the lower depths of the totem well, the Wawilak men arrived and saw
the scene of the tremendous struggle in which the Wawilak sisters had
used all of the sacred rituals they knew to prevent their being defeated by
the great python. The men, who had been searching for the sisters, went
to sleep there that night and during the night they dreamed. In the dream
their Wawilak sisters returned and taught them all of the sacred ceremonies
that they had sung and danced before being taken down into the
sacred water hole. The souls of the Wawilak men were the beings who
experienced and first learned these ceremonies and transmitted them
through the dream to the mundane bodies of the men, and from them the
knowledge of how to perform correctly the great ceremonies was passed on
from generation to generation to the present day.

781 Most of the dreams experienced by the Murngin are felt to be of a
dangerous character and sometimes directly responsible for causing illnesses.
153 Whenever a man has had a dream of this description he immediately builds
151 up his fire and goes through the leaf (warntdjer) ceremony to chase away
any evil which might have come with the dream, either in the form of the
soul of a dead man, the power of some great totem, or because of associated
images with the totem of the dead, as, for example, in the dream
of an open grave or of a man with ceremonial blood upon him. If the dream
is of the pronouncedly dangerous variety the man, when he awakens, may
put his whole family through the warntdjer ceremony to make sure that
781 the stronger evil has been removed. Dreams are definitely associated with
black magic, for at times it is difficult for a man to determine which is
154 dream and which is waking reality. Occasionally a man will have a dream
in which he sees himself being subjected to sorcery; he awakens and
believes the dream to have been something that happened to him in his
waking experience.

Munyiryir's brother declared that Kimingmulu had attempted to steal his soul. He said that two or three nights before he made his accusation he was lying asleep with his wife in his camp on Pudjeriki Island when just before morning someone came along and stepped on his foot. He was dreaming at the time. He did not think this was part of his dream but that someone was trying to steal his soul. When he awakened he looked to see who had stepped on him because he thought that someone was trying to get hold of him to put a log on him. He followed the tracks that were near him and discovered them to be Kimingmulu's. He said nothing to the suspected sorcerer but talked the matter over with his brothers and other near relatives. The man he accused was a member of a group with whom his clan had had strained relations. After careful interviewing it became clear that Munyiryir's brother did not know which was dream and which was actuality, but that his seeing the tracks of one who belonged to a pos-

3: Mountford
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Murngin OI17

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[Materials relating to the mythology of the Murngin may be found in Category 116, pp. 267-287, 289-303, 305-308, 316, 319, 321, 330, 332-360, 362-380, 383, 385, 387-388, 390-391, 393-404, 406-407, 409, 419-454, 456, 459, 468, 471, 473, and 488-504. --Analyst]

GROUP I

The Sacred Figures and Their Background.

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616
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The figures under discussion here belong to both moieties. The *'Wauwəlak* Sisters[9] are *'du:a*—the more conservative of the two moieties, while *'Laintʃuŋ* and *'Banaitʃa* are *'jiritʃa*—the moiety that concerns itself to a great extent with introduced beliefs and customs.

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● 173
The *'Wauwəlak* are two " Dreaming "[10] Sisters, associated with the *'dʒuŋgəwən*, *'kunapipi* and *'ŋu:rlmq:k* ceremonies, which are age-grading and seasonal festivals of the *'du:a 'ŋa:ra* (i.e. " shade " or shelter).[11] Their mythology and their song cycle are preoccupied with after-birth blood, with menstruation, and with giant rock pythons, by one of whom they are swallowed. Although they themselves are looked on as Fertility Mothers,[12] they were originally brought into being by the *'Dʒaŋgəwəl*, the most important of all the Ancestral Beings, who were responsible for the peopling of this coast with the predecessors of the present-day aborigines, and for creating all natural resources. The *'Dʒaŋgəwəl* Sisters, *'Maralaitʃ* and *'Pildʒinburərəijn*, and *'Dʒaŋgəwəl* himself, travelled from the mythical land of *Bə'ralku*, bringing with them the sacred *'raŋga* objects used in the sacred rituals, in addition to the ceremonies mentioned above. Unfortunately, although carved figures of the *'Dʒaŋgəwəl* are occasionally made, none were used during our period of field work, although all their rituals were observed.

173
Briefly then, the two *'Wauwəlak* Sisters (one younger than the other) came from *'Mu:ruwəl* waterhole, in the " Bush " on the mainland below Milingimbi. The elder sister was pregnant, and eventually gave birth to a child ; the after-birth blood was still running as she walked along near this place, accompanied by her sister and carrying the baby. They arrived at a deep well, near which they camped.

A large rock python, living in this well, smelt the blood ; he came out and sprayed out water like rain. The elder sister told the other to make a bark hut, and by the time this was erected, it was dark. The snake then made vivid flashes of lightning, but the Sisters were unaware that this was his doing. Then the snake came out of the waterhole and on to the bank, and slowly moved towards the sisters. When the women saw him coming, the younger sister got up, and began to dance to keep him away. When she was tired, she called to her sister, who then began to dance in her turn. But as the snake still came on, the elder sister called out, " Come on, sister. It's no good for me—my blood is coming out, and he can smell it and he's coming closer." So the younger sister danced. When she was tired the elder sister

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[114]
[9] L. Warner (*op. cit.* p. 248 *et seq.*) has given a description of the mythology and ritual of the " Wawilak " Sisters. The version given in this paper differs slightly from this.

[10] Cf. the concept of the " Eternal Dreamtime." Their reality is in the past, but their spirit is eternal.

[778]
[11] Each moiety has a sacred shelter during its ceremonies, adjacent to the dancing ground.

[12] The concept of the Fertility Mother is common in Northern Territory of Australia : *vide* [illegible]. and C. Berndt, *Sexual Behaviour in Western Arnhem Land*, MS. book for publication.

danced again, and the snake came closer. In fear the two sisters retired to their hut, 773
and the monstrous snake coiled around it and put his head through the opening.
He sprayed water over them, so that they became slippery and soft for swallowing ;
then he proceeded to swallow the baby, the mother and finally the younger sister.

This is of course only the main theme ; the original version and song cycle is very long and detailed, and instead of the blood from after-birth, it is menstruation blood that attracts the snake.

The *'Wauwɔlak* myth and sacred songs are known to both men and women, but 773
the ritual and part of the ceremony is for men only, and is held away from the camp.[13]
However, certain associated ceremonies (e.g. the *'dʒuŋgɔwɔn*) are performed in the 533
main camp, where conventionalized posts are placed to symbolize the *'Wauwɔlak* 562
Sisters, around which women dance. In the north-eastern corner of Arnhem Land,
as in other parts along the coast, women are acquainted with much of the sacred life,
but may not discuss it. It is said that they originally monopolized all sacred ritual
and dogma, and relinquished this right only when their ceremonial objects were
stolen by the men. There is also an " outside " or secular song-cycle dealing with
the ordinary adventures of these two sisters, which is sung in the camp and to which
women dance.

But the carved figures illustrated here are used as *'raŋga* objects, in the same 196
way as the sacred *'maraiin* painted and feathered-string-decorated poles of *'Dʒaŋgɔwɔl*.
These are kept in a temporary storehouse out near the dancing ground, and shown to 778
fully initiated men.[14] The original artist who has made the figure enters the hut ; 533
outside, the postulants are sitting or standing with faces turned away. The song-man
begins to clap his sticks and the others are led up to look upon the sacred object.
Finally, when the singing is completed, the designs on the figure are explained and
discussed. At times, during the showing of the object, the figure may be held ritually
by an actor who writhes on the ground like the python who swallowed the sisters.

What the *'Dʒaŋgɔwɔl* is to the *'du:a*, *'Laintʃuŋ*[15] is to the *'jiritʃa* : he is the most 776
important of all the *'jiritʃa* Ancestral Beings, and is highly sacred. He came out of 616
the sea, emerging from the waters like a giant stone from the receding tide, at
'Du:wɔn'miliŋwu, near Blue Mud Bay. His body bore variegated water-marks 773
(*'ra:ŋ*) that formed patterns. In the figure illustrated, the totemic designs (belonging 532
to a number of *'jiritʃa* clans) painted on its body are water-mark patterns.

Now *'Barɔma*,[16] a *'jiritʃa* man, saw *'Laintʃuŋ* for the first time as he stood on the 773
beach, leaning on a sacred *'raŋga* yam stick, and was surprised to observe these
watermarks.

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[13] This with many details is an enactment of the above myth ; i.e. in the *'dʒuŋgɔwɔn* and *'kunapipi*.

[14] Those who have gone through the *'Dʒaŋgɔwɔl* rituals.

[15] The name *'Laintʃuŋ* means " white cloud from the sea," signified by the white face in the figure illustrated.

[16] Called also *'Bilmɔlandʒi*, derived from sacred beating sticks (called *'bilma*).

● 173 **"I am *'Laintʃuŋ,*" said the Ancestral Being. "I bring all the *'jiritʃa* dreaming and painting: these will belong to you people, no matter what language and what tribe." Then he gave to *'Barəma* the sacred paintings and the *'raŋga*, so that the totemic designs were distributed among the clans.**

The two men then ritually called out (i.e. *'bilkaju:n*), so that all the people could come and learn what had happened. When they had all arrived, sacred dancing took place, paintings were drawn and their meanings were explained. *'Laintʃuŋ's* voice went to all the *'jiritʃa* clans, and his law became established.

Eventually, he turned himself into a paper-bark tree, and his son *'Banaitʃa*[17] took his place. Now *'Banaitʃa* was a great religious leader, who was able to elaborate on the ritual and dogma laid down in the beginning by *'Laintʃuŋ*, his father. He began to teach men, but his disciples became frightened and talked among themselves. "Is this man really connected with *'Laintʃuŋ*, as a son, as he says? What have we got to do?" And they climbed trees with their spears, and waiting for an opportunity speared him so that he died. This was in the *'Bunəraitbi* country at Blue Mud Bay.

But when they had killed him, the murderers realized that *'Banaitʃa* was really a great man, and had had a great deal more to tell them; and they were "sorry." So in memory of him they carved his representation, and also made a paper-bark *'banaitʃa* pad which is beaten on the ground during sacred rituals; and the sound of this is *'Banaitʃa's* voice.[18]

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118 **The carved figures of both *'Laintʃuŋ* and *'Banaitʃa* are shown to postulants in the same way as are the *'Wauwəlak* figures; but this *'jiritʃa* ritual is at no time associated with secular ceremonies, or with song-cycles sung in the main camp.**

The 'Wauwəlak Figures.

118 ***Plate I, Figure 1.*** **The younger *'Wauwəlak* sister, who danced to keep away the large python that eventually swallowed the two sisters and the child.**

532 **The treatment of this figure's face is peculiar to *'du:a* craftsmen of the old school, and is used only in relation to the *'Wauwəlak* and *'Dʒaŋgawəl*. The carving of the majority of these sacred figures, both *'du:a* and *'jiritʃa* (excluding Figure 6), is distinctive, and differs from the treatment of figures belonging to the other groups. The sacred designs are applied directly to a background of red ochre. The breasts are those of a young girl, while the ridge between them is a cicatrization. Arms are carved solidly to the trunk of the figure, while vulva and buttocks are raised from the background and are not patterned. The whole is painted in red, white, black and yellow. The figure wears around its head a *'bulkəwalku* ornament, and on its body a**

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[17] I.e. a part of the paper-bark tree; also associated with a giant barramundi fish.

[18] The complete ritual, songs and sacred objects associated with *'Laintʃuŋ* and *'Banaitʃa* will be discussed at a later date. Representations of *'Laintʃuŋ-'Banaitʃa* objects and paper-bark beaters are held at the Department of Anthropology, Sydney University, for the Australian National Research Council.

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j *'kunja:lili* boomerang, which is not used but is simply a pattern; this is the small one associated with the whale.

k the *'maiiga* girdle.

l menstruation blood flowing inside the young sister's body; it flows around her navel from the breasts and enters her uterus (*m*), where it is stored, and finally escapes at the menstrual period.

n cuts on the upper thighs or buttocks, signifying the circumcision of her husband.

o menstruation blood running down her legs.

The designs on the back of the figure are similar to those on the front; on the arms are other marks, signifying cuts for her brother's circumcision, and dots which are *'du:ritji* flowers.

●773 An addition to the abovementioned myth tells how the younger sister danced forward to meet her older sister after the birth of her child. As soon as the younger entered the hut (branch shelter) in which the mother and child were living, she felt her menstrual pains; the blood was flowing from breasts to navel and thence to her uterus, and then began to flow in the normal way as she sat down. In this case, it is said, the menstrual blood was brought to flow sooner than she had expected, because of the girl's energetic dancing and the movement of her hips and buttocks.

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Artist: *'Mauwu:lan*, headman of the *'Ri:rədziyu 'mala, 'du:a.*

Full length, 32 inches; length from top of head to shoulders, 8 inches; width of shoulders, 4·5 inches; diameter of head, 4 inches.

Plate I, Figure 2. The *'Wauwəlak* Sister. This well-made figure is similar in design to the younger sister (as above, figure 1), but the pattern is first incised on a red-ochred background and finally painted in black, yellow and white. Arms are standing out from the trunk of the body, and the breasts are elongated to signify "fallen milks," by which term they are known, i.e. full and pendulous breasts.

There is a little variation in the meaning of the designs. Horizontal lines between and above the breasts are cicatrizations, while the cut immediately beneath is said to keep the breasts from falling too far, and to stop the milk in them from flowing back towards the navel and into the uterus and out through the vagina with the after-birth blood. Marks on the shoulders are *'galmakit*, for a brother's circumcision; while dots on the chest are *'kapu:wa:pa* or scars, signifying the rain sent by the python.

The design on the back of the figure, similar to that on the front, represents blood flowing from about the vertebræ above the buttocks to the lower ribs and thence to the navel (surrounding marks signifying flowing blood are *'mimpu*) and to the uterus, and out through the vagina. The latter is painted red, like the blood. This is the blood from after-birth. The belief that the blood flows from the back, is said to have its foundation in menstrual pains in that region, and pains in the same place when giving birth to a child; e.g. the midwife presses and massages the back of a woman at an impending birth, and as the child is born.

4: Berndt & Berndt E-5 (1946-1947) 1948
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It should be mentioned that originally the *'milka* (*g*) belonged to the *'Mayga:lilji* speaking group ; but this big log, *'hadauwalk* (see *d*) " said he was in the wrong place : he had become rotten from lying in fresh water." He (i.e. the log) left that place and, travelling under the ground, came out at *'Druru:lapɔ* at Arnhem Bay (named after *'Druru:lapɔ* at Blue Mud Bay) with the *'milka* inside ; the latter was alive because it came out in salt water. The log (which is used as a sacred object) went on, coming out from the ground at *'Danayalpi* (below *'Druru:lapɔ*) ; later it went on to *'Kanbaldyi* (on the mainland opposite Elcho Island), and then on to *'Mi:lowe* (near Milingimbi), so that now all these places from Blue Mud Bay to Milingimbi are ritually connected through the *'jiritja* clans.

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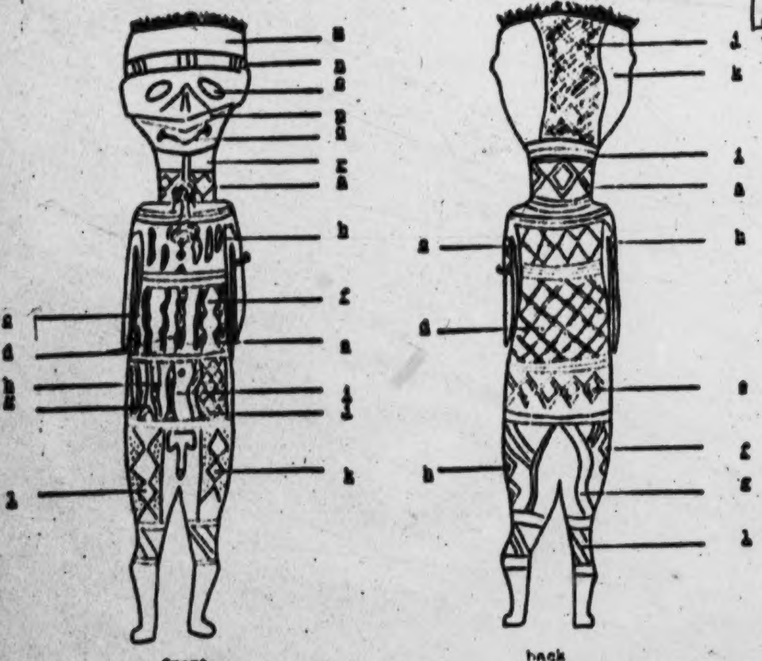

front back

Text-figure B.

On the other hand, the *'Madarlpa*-speaking people have fire dreaming ; this fire came from burning stringy-bark, which extended through the *'Manaitja* territory where the honey and bees were (*j*), and on to the *'Gumaitj* ; from there to the *'Ri:taryu*, *'Bilhilji*, *'Ku:pɔpiyu* and *'Warɔmeri*. It was from there that a small bird took a

●773 burning twig and flew with it to the salt water. In reference to designs *h* and *l*, it is said that the honey bee made fire in every direction—so that the bee and honey design joins with the fire.[31]

532 *Back of Figure.*

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- *a* *'Dalwɔŋu* design; see above: diamond-shaped design red-ochred, edged with white and yellow.
- *b* *'Dalwɔŋu* design on arms.
- *c* " bottom *'Dalwɔŋu* " design: diamond design edged with yellow, filled in with white stripes.
- *d* *'Ŋelkala:* ordinary honey design; no fire or honey bee: black, yellow, red and white colouring.
- *e* *'Bilkilji:* freshwater long-necked turtle design, which has water-weed under its shell: it is for this reason that it is associated with the *'Dalwɔŋu* (see front of figure design, *a*): diamond designs filled in with red-ochre, edged with yellow and white; rest white.
- *f* on side of thighs: *'Bilkilji-'Ku:pɔpiŋu* (joined), as *c*.
- *g* water-marks on body, yellow and white.
- *h* on left side of thigh: *'Deiwɔru-'Bilkilji* (joined), as *c*.
- *i* yellow band edged with white.
- *j* red-ochred.
- *k* white, continuation from front of figure.
- *l* white strokes.

In the painting of this figure the totemic designs of the *'Lamɔmɔri*, actual *'Warɔmɔri*, and *'Makálranalmɔri* were omitted, because the headmen of these groups were absent.

Artists: *'Li:ɔgɔ'raŋ*, *'Dalwɔŋu*; and *'Muŋgɔraui*, *'Gumaitʃ*: *'jiritʃa 'mata*.

Full length, 36·5 inches; length from top of head to shoulders, 10 inches; length of beard, 6 inches; diameter of head, 5·25 inches; width across shoulders, 5·5 inches.

Plate I, Figure 4. *'Banaitʃa*, the son of *'Laintʃuŋ*. This is also a remarkable piece of carving, unlike any of the other figures. A massive neck supports a comparatively small head with a contemplative expression, whereas that of the *'Laintʃuŋ* is almost enigmatic. Except for the chest design, the figure is completely red-ochred—which makes it more difficult to photograph. Particularly noticeable is the carving of the protruding buttocks and the delicately shaped legs. Arms are well set from the main trunk of the body; elbows, but not hands, are shown.

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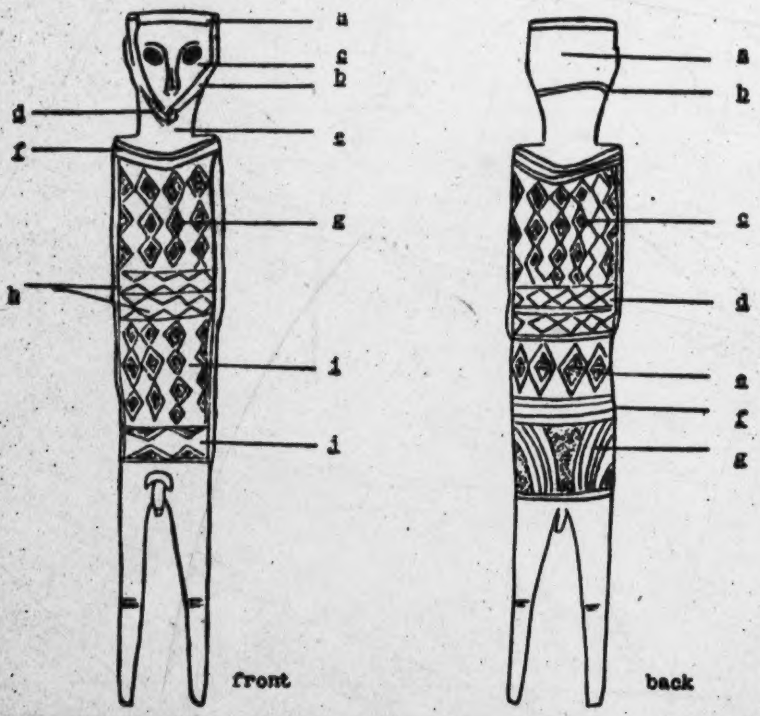
[31] Long and elaborate myths and songs describe and explain these totemic clan designs that *'Laintʃuŋ* distributed. These will be discussed later. Large collections of bark drawings also present and describe the sacred designs, as does a large collection of brown paper drawings, all in the possession of the Department of Anthropology, Sydney University, and of the writers.

532 *d* water flowing across: first row of diamond designs, filled in with red and white, second row filled in with white.
778 *e* salt water; diamond design filled in with red.
f white, red and yellow bands.
g sea-weed in red, yellow and white on a background of black.



Text-figure C.

●[173] *'Banaitʃa* was apparently first in the *'Dalwɔŋu*[33] territory, and gave to people of this language group three lots of special totemic paintings, and not just one, as in the case of the other groups. Hence the *'Dalwɔŋu* have a prior right over *'Banaitʃa* rituals.

Artist: *'Liːɔgɔ'ray*, as above.

[33] Seaside "bottom" *'Dalwɔŋu*.

Full length, 33·5 inches; length from top of head to shoulders, 6·25 inches; 532
diameter of head, 5·25 inches; width at shoulders, 4·5 inches. 778

Plate I, Figure 6. The final figure of this group is a representation of a *'Banaitʃa*
female. Very little of these women is mentioned in the sacred mythology, but songs 532
do refer to sisters of *'Banaitʃa*. This figure is in the likeness of *'Laintʃuŋ*'s daughter 778
at a place called *'Gu:lɔldʒi* in the *'Dalwɔŋu* country. Her special name is *'Barama*, 773
while her sacred name is *'Bilwana*. She is also called *'Mundamunda*, from her body markings, representing bubbles rising to the surface of fresh water, and *'Mundalwaltun*, which refers to barramundi scales arising from the water.[23] This woman, unlike her father *'Laintʃuŋ*, always hides in the water and never emerges.

The figure is rather carelessly carved, and the designs are coloured yellow and 532
white on a red-ochred background, in the conventional manner. Both back and 778
front of this figure are patterned in the sacred *'Dalwɔŋu* clan design, representing bubbles arising from the water, and water-weed spreading across the surface of the water. The pupils of the eyes are painted black; while a yellow band across the forehead, with vertical white and red lines, is a headband, and other lines represent facial markings in yellow and white.

Artist: *'Li:ɔgɔ'raŋ*, as above.

Full length, 29·5 inches; length from top of head to shoulders, 7·25 inches; diameter of head, 5 inches; width across shoulders, 5·5 inches.

GROUP 2

The Figures and Their Background.

Male and female *'Kultana*, each known by a variety of names,[24] are associated 776
with the *'jiritʃa* conception of the Land of Spirits, to which human beings of this
moiety must go after death. The spirits of deceased *'du:a* moiety men and women, 616
irrespective of clan, travel to the fabulous country of *Bɔ'ralku*, the original home of 775
the Great Ancestral Beings, known as the *'Dʒaŋgᵊwɔl*, who themselves brought into being the predecessors of the present aborigines.[25] Consistent with their less conservative ideas, the *'jiritʃa* home of the dead is located at *'Ba:du* (or Badu; i.e. Badu Island in the Torres Strait Islands group). It is there, in a land of running spring water, coconut palms, bread fruit, rice and light-skinned people who cut timber and live in stilted houses, that the spirit is said to find eventual repose.

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[23] For *'Banaitʃa* is associated with the barramundi fish.

[24] The man is called also *'Ranjiranji*, *'Ŋi:wunba*, *'Ma:ldʒidʒi*, *'Wu:rimila*, *'Li:abalguk*, *'Gɔ:ŋᵊwaldʒuŋ*, *'Dʒu:piŋa:ma*, *'Kauwu:ŋɔ*, *'Dʒalba:ru*, *'Kundʒᵊrɔl*, etc., as well as a number of subsidiary names referring to particular incidents in his existence, e.g. *'Du:ga:dʒi:njalwu:l* (looking around for stingray in the mangroves), *'Jiribuma* (scratching himself after being bitten by mosquitoes), *'Dʒi:mɔ:luŋɔ:rɔrɔ* (coming out into the shallow water of a mangrove swamp, looking for stingray), etc., etc. His wife is also known as *'Wuleiwuli*, *'Danbɔramɔ*, *'Munandilŋa*, *'Kɔ:ŋwɔ:raiŋun*, *'Lauᵊrilauᵊri*, *'Mu:rhandʒa*, *'Kɔ:ŋlilji'naŋɔ*, *'Kuruŋgur*, *'Malwuŋgitʃ*, *'Meiwada*, *'Dilmi:a*, *'Mara:waldʒiŋani* and *'Murandilŋɔ*, etc.

[25] *'Dʒaŋgᵊwɔl* is associated with the concept of the Fertility Mother, which will be discussed in detail later.

776 *'Kultana* belongs to the *'Gumaitʃ'mata* (language) group near Port Bradshaw, but this spirit and his wife seem to have other spheres of influence outside their home 775 territory. For example, *'Kultana* also lives on an island called *'Mɔ:dilŋa*, north of the Wessells, and lights large fires of grass and " rubbish " to attract spirits of the dead on their way to *'Ba:du*. The male *'Kultana*, when he is not supervising the journeying spirits, hunts for stingray in the shallow waters of the mangrove swamps, and scratches his mosquito bites; while his wife gathers wood, collects jungle-fowl eggs, and generally spends her time in the jungles fringing the beach. There are no actual ceremonies associated with these *'Kultana*, although there is some secular [533] mortuary dancing; but there are both sacred and camp songs related to their adventures and general behaviour.

'Murɔru:ma is the " Turtle " Man from Bremer Island (at one time called Melville 776 Island), and is associated with *'du:a 'Ri:rədʒiŋu 'mata* secular and sacred life; he, 773 his wives and his sons, *'Daŋɔdʒi:ɔna* and *'Wuralwural*, are immortalized particularly 533 in an elaborate song cycle sung in the camp, while *'Murɔru:ma* himself plays only a subsidiary part in the sacred songs. However, to the *'Ri:rədʒiŋu* speaking group he is an important being, connected with the principal physical features of their country, which is localized around Yirrkalla. The myth itself deals with his turtle hunting, 773 the murder of his *'jiritʃa 'Wɔnguri* wife (he had other wives, belonging to the *'Lamɔmɔri*, *'Warɔmɔri* and *'Gumaitʃ* speaking clans), and consequent feuds arising from this killing. His wife was killed because she wished to have nothing to do with her husband, refused his sexual attentions, and wanted to return to her own country. He killed her by inserting his knife in her vagina, and slitting her upwards to the throat. A revenge expedition on the part of the dead wife's family succeeded in killing *'Murɔru:ma* at Melville Bay, on the mainland.

'Murɔru:ma's two sons, who were living at Bremer Island, came with their friends to the point of land opposite Bremer, near Yirrkalla; there they saw the spirit of *'Murɔru:ma*, but believing him to be a human being they were glad, as they had not heard of his death. Coming close to him, they saw him disappear; and looking out to sea they saw a big rock which they knew must be his spirit. They spoke among themselves, saying that they would avenge his death. The rest of the myth concerns several killings and other details too numerous to present here.

[532] These carved figures, whether they be the realistic or conventionalized (i.e. 778 as the " post " figure, Plate I, Figure 4) representations, are used as *'raŋga* objects, in much the same way as are the sacred (*'maraiin*) painted and feathered-string-decorated 796 poles of *'Dʒaŋgɔwɔl*, *'Laintʃuŋ*, *'Banaitʃa*, *'Wauwɔlak* etc. They are kept in a storehouse near the ritual dancing ground and shown to initiated men.[28] The original artist who has made the figure enters the hut; outside, the postulants sit or stand with averted heads. The song man begins to beat his sticks, and the others are led up to look upon the sacred object. Finally, when the singing is completed, the

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[28] Those who have gone through a series of *'maraiin* ceremonies, but may not yet have been admitted to the viewing of certain sacred *'raŋga*.

horde. Until this ceremony has been held, these individuals must not share food with others, and so are, for the time being, shut off from the normal life of the community. 764 783

Behind all these beliefs there exists a very rich mythology concerning the existence and exploits of culture heroes who are believed to have originated the customs of the people. 773

"Speak but the word; the Evangel shall awaken
Life in the lost, the hero in the slave."
—F. W. H. Myers

775 it was not an ordinary fish, but was being used by the child spirit
787 as a means of approaching its prospective father.

774 The Mali is shared by man with the whole of the lesser creation. Every living creature, every tree, the very ground itself has its Mali. There can be no existence apart from this spiritual quality.

775 After death the Birrimbirr, or spirit proper, is believed to pass on to Buralkor, the spirit world, which is believed to exist on this world plane away beyond the sun-rising. In this world there are two regions, one good, the other bad, but the spirit's ultimate destination is in no sense determined on ethical grounds. Reaching Buralkor, the spirit once again becomes clothed in physical form, and life goes on as it is lived here.

Creation

773
776 In the dim dawn days of the world, previous to the existence of men and women as they are found to-day, the world was peopled by a race of semi-human, semi-animal creatures, who were intimately concerned with the origin of the social and ceremonial life of the people. Some of the descendants of these creatures developed into purely animal forms, and others into humans, and many of the "bungals," or open ceremonies, of the people consist of a dramatic recounting of their doings. Behind these there existed certain demi-gods, who were the agents of creation and the ancestors of the present tribal groups. From them the various ceremonial totems were received, and by them the social organisation was established.

Back of these again is the hazy conception of a great spirit known as "Wungarr," by whom the actual agents of creation are believed to have been commissioned and sent forth. The term "Wungarr" is also applied to the dream days of pre-history. By far the most important of these beliefs are those which centre round "Kaitchalan," who is conceived of as a great serpent inhabiting a pool in the upper reaches of the Woolen River. This great creature is believed to have devoured two women who were the most important of the agents of creation, so usurping their powers, and making himself the originator of tribal organisation, social laws and customs, and ceremonial life.

776 Although regarded as in a special sense the ancestor of a certain totemic group of hordes, the power and influence of Kaitchalan are recognised and accepted by all divisions of the tribe.

6: Berndt E-5 (1946-1947) 1951

OI17 Murngin OI17

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131
133
487
177
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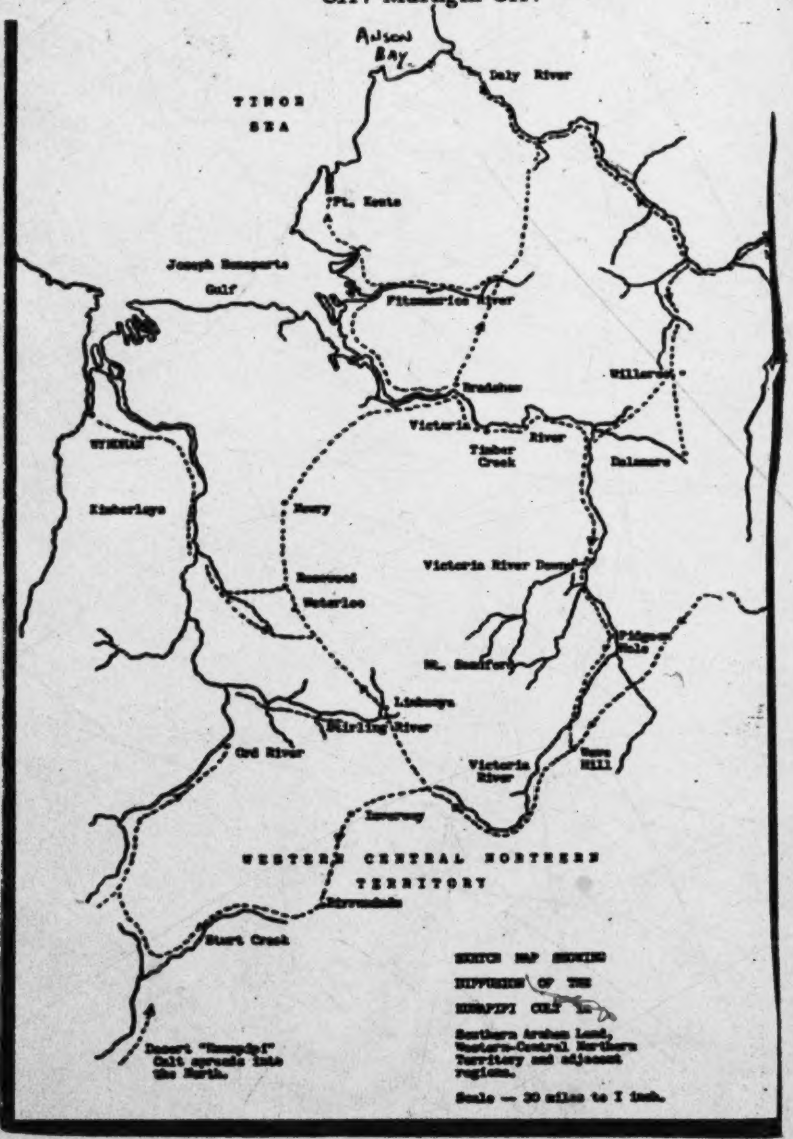
Anson Bay
Daly River
TIMOR SEA
?Pt. Keats
Joseph Bonaparte Gulf
Fitzmaurice River
Willeroo
Bradshaw
Victoria River
Timber Creek
Dalmore
Wyndham
Kimberleys
Newry
Victoria River Downs
Rosewood
Waterloo
Pigeon Hole
Mt. Sanford
Limbunya
Stirling River
Ord River
Wave Hill
Victoria River
Inverway
WESTERN CENTRAL NORTHERN TERRITORY
Birrundudu
Sturt Creek
Desert "Kunapipi" Cult spreads into the North.
SKETCH MAP SHOWING DIFFUSION OF THE KUNAPIPI CULT in Southern Arnhem Land, Western-Central Northern Territory and adjacent regions.
Scale — 30 miles to I inch.

[Front End Map (A)]

6: Berndt E-5 (1946-1947) 1951

O117 Murngin O117

102
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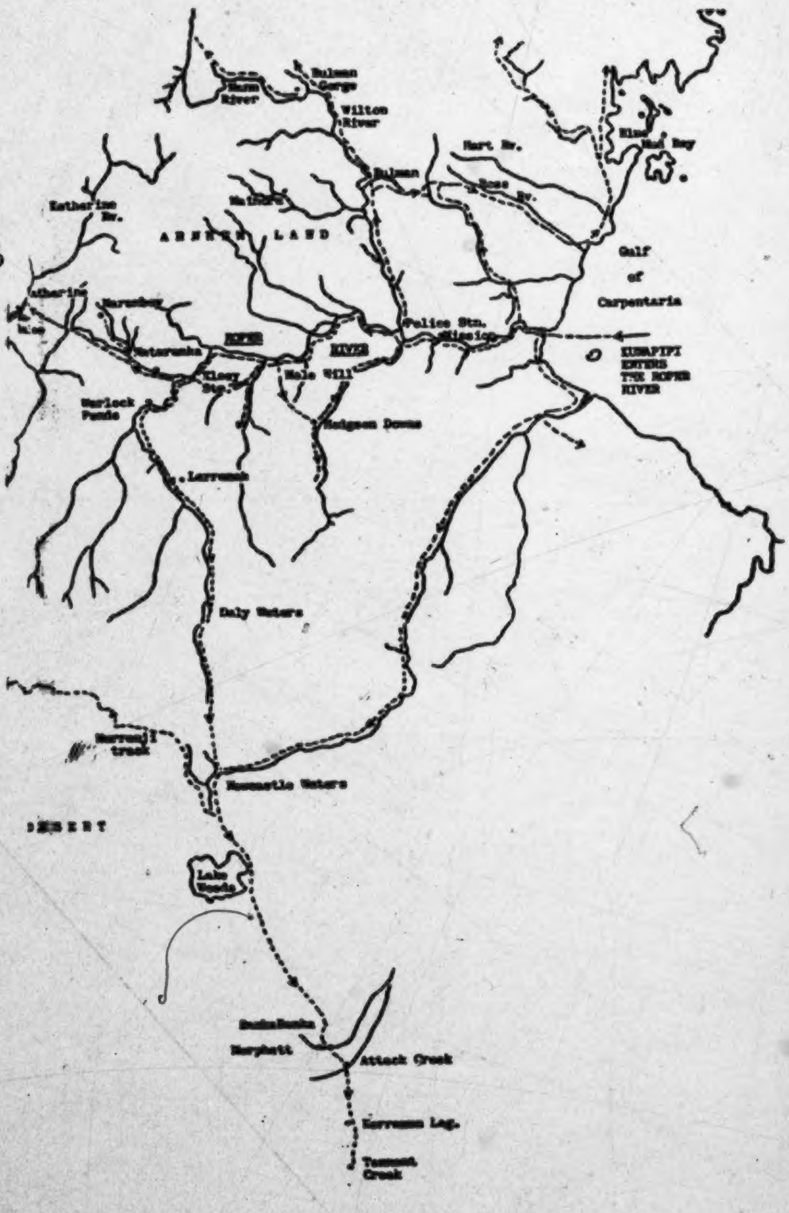
Bulman Gorge
Mann River
Wilton River
Hart Rv.
Blue Mud Bay
Bulman
Rose Rv.
Mainoru
Katherine Rv.
ARNHEM LAND
Gulf of Carpentaria
Katherine
Maranboy
ROPER RIVER
Mataranka
Police Stn.
Mission
KUNAPIPI ENTERS THE ROPER RIVER
Elsey Stn.
Mole Hill
Warlock Ponds
Hodgson Downs
Larrimah
Daly Waters
Murranji track
Newcastle Waters
DESERT
Lake Woods
Banka Banka
Morphett
Attack Creek
Kurrundi Lag.
Tennant Creek

[Front End Map (B)]

INTRODUCTION

PROFESSOR A. P. ELKIN

Baldwin Spencer in his *Native Tribes of the Northern Territory*, 773
1914 (Chapter IX, and pp. 217–8) recorded myths which ascribed
important creative and formative activities to culture-heroines, in 114
particular to Imberombera and Ungulla Robunbun in western Arnhem Land, and ceremonial activity together with original possession of the bullroarer, to Kunapipi women in the Roper River region. All alike left spirit-children at places along the routes of their journeyings, and the first two were responsible for the tribal and linguistic divisions in their region, having "sent forth" spirit-children to found the tribes.*

In 1937, Professor W. L. Warner's important book, *A Black* 114
Civilization, was published, giving the results of his field work in
1926-29 at Millingimbi (Crocodile Islands) and the neighbouring 773
region of north-east Arnhem Land. Half of it is a study of mythology 796
and ritual. Two of the most important figures are the Wawilak sisters, who named the animals and plants as they travelled from inland to the north along the Goyder River, and who, in an endeavour to ward off the great ancestral python, Yurlunggur, and to end the wet season, sang and danced the songs of four great rituals, one of which was the Gunabibi (Kunapipi). The Yurlunggur swallowed the two women and their babies, causing their deaths, but their spirits lived on and revealed the rituals to two Dreamtime men,
so that the important past should not be forgotten. This included the [304]
introduction of circumcision which the Wawalik had intended to
perform on their sons (Warner, pp. 250–9). In the Gunabibi ritual, the Gunabibi is the bullroarer, and also symbolizes Yurlunggur who swallowed and regurgitated the two women and their sons (pp. 293–4). Another important ritual myth is about two Djunkgao sisters who came into the region from the south-east, naming natural species

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* Compare too the similar myth of the "big woman", Warahmoorungee, of [171]
the Iwaidja tribe, in this region, as given by Inspector Foelsche, "Notes on the Aborigines of North Australia", *Journal, Royal Society of South Australia, Vol. V, p.* 17. This is the "Mother", "Waramurunggoindju", who, Mr. Berndt was informed by the Maung at Goulburn Island, came from the Macassan Islands, and eventually by way of Timor and Bathurst Island to Cape Don, the Iwaidja and other tribal territories, and finally to east Arnhem Land. R. and C. Berndt, *Sexual Behaviour in Western Arnhem Land*, Chapter IV, Section 3, to be published by the Viking Fund Publications in Anthropology.

114 as they came, making ritual-totemic wells or centres, and giving
birth to the ancestors of the present people. They made and carried
•773 sacred totemic emblems, and instituted the Narra ritual in which
796 these are used; but some Dreamtime men stole the baskets in which
they kept these objects and performed the Narra—a theft which the
Djunkgao took in good grace (pp. 336–40).

[114] As we read these myths and the description of the associated
rituals, we detect a difference, at least in emphasis, in the rôles played
773 by women in the creative epoch in this region as compared with other
562 regions for which we have reliable information. According to the
classic works of Spencer and Gillen, *The Native Tribes of Central Australia* (1899) and *The Northern Tribes of Central Australia* (1904), and the later work of Carl Strehlow, *Die Aranda-und Loritja-Stämme in Zentral-Australien*, I, II and III, 1907, 1908, 1910, human beings arose from semi-human-animal forbears, or were given their forms in an operation performed by "self-existent" totemic beings on existing incomplete beings; and in some cases, too, in the more northern tribes, human beings just arose. There is no instance of one or two great culture-heroines being held responsible for natural features, tribes and languages, though women were included in many of the earliest groups of human wanderers; more explicitly the Unmatjera have a tradition of several groups of *ertwaininga* women who wandered across the country, carrying yamsticks, and leaving individuals behind at various spots, which became spirit totemic centres, from which these individuals went forth to be reincarnated.

In the sphere of ritual, however, the myths reflect a stage or period in which women took an active part and had full knowledge of sacred symbols. Thus, in one myth, three women from time to time painted themselves with sacred designs, carried the nurtunja (a sacred symbol), performed ceremonies and changed their totemic and subsection affiliations. In another, the Unthippa women in the course of their wanderings, used to carry off and circumcize any novices they found, an event to which reference is still made in circumcision ritual (*Native Tribes*, pp. 195–6, 433, 441–3; *Northern Tribes*, pp. 146, 150, 152–9).

171 If we compare the mythology of the centre and north-centre with
773 that of Arnhem Land as we knew it in 1937, we see that in both the
spirits of men and women pre-exist because of happenings in the
562 Dreamtime, and women in that period played an inner rôle in what
[774] is now ritual reserved for initiated men. In the former vast regions,
however, women did not form the country, name natural species, determine the tribal and linguistic divisions, nor institute ceremonies But this is just what the culture heroines of Arnhem Land were said to have done. This difference in power, or in degree of function, was sufficient to suggest further research in this region into the rôle of the

culture-heroine in mythology; and all the more so, as no such dis- 171
tinctively creative powers were ascribed to females in the myths of 773
any other region then studied, such as the Kimberley Division of
Western Australia, the Great Victoria Desert, North Queensland, 562
nor South-East Australia. In the north-west and north-east of the
continent, the important creative culture-heroes are males and many
of them were at times in animal form. In the South-East not only was
the male aspect dominant, but there was only one great hero, for
each tribe or region, named here Bundjil, there Nurunderi, or
Baiami or Gulambra or Goin and so on.[*]

In 1939 my friend, Mr. W. E. Harney, who had spent many years [114]
in and around Arnhem Land, and has a greater and sounder knowl-
edge of Aboriginal custom, belief and ritual than any other layman
sent me some notes in which much prominence was given to the
"Old Woman," Kunapipi, both in doctrines and in ritual. After [794]
discussing the material with him, I was satisfied that in the Roper, 776
Macarthur and Victoria River areas, a very vivid cult of the "mother-
goddess" type was functioning. Her name varied, being Kunapipi, 773
Mumuna, Kliarin-Kliari, and so on, but she was usually referred to
as the "Old Woman" or the "Mother". She was the source of life in
man and nature, both in the Dreamtime or creative past and now.
In this activity she was associated with a great serpent, usually the
Rainbow serpent, who "made the road" into the womb for the pre- [775]
existent spirits to be incarnated and reincarnated. She was also the
very earth itself, that from which living things came and on which
they depended for sustenance. This doctrine was expressed in the 796
Kunapipi ritual. In it her womb was represented, by a trench into
which the initiands were put, and from which they were reborn. In
addition, the bullroarer, also representing her womb, when swung
at the ritual became the sojourning symbol of each initiand's ritual
or "wood" spirit. After the ceremony, when the Yermalindji, the
symbol of the great snake, was burnt in the earth-womb, the bull-
roarer was buried there also. Thus, the lad's ritual "shade" remained
in Kunapipi, and did so until the disintegration of the symbol, when [775]

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[*] I can speak from personal field work for all these regions except the north-east. See also articles in *Oceania*, Vol. III, No. 1, pp. 46-62, R. Piddington, "Karadjeri Initiation". Vol. VI, No. 1, pp. 66-93, Ursula H. McConnel, "Myths of the Wikmunkan and Wiknatara Tribes"; *Ibid.*, Vol. VI, No. 4, pp. 452-477, Vol. VII, No. 1, pp. 69-105, "Totemic Hero Cults in the Cape York Peninsula, North Queensland"; Vol. IX, No. 4, pp. 382-404, A. Capell, "Mythology in Northern Kimberley". Vol. XIII, No. 3, pp. 255-260, and Vol. XIV, No. 1, pp. 31-53; "A Preliminary Report of Field Work in the Ooldea Region, Western South Australia", by R. and C. Berndt, *Oceania Bound Reprint*, Sydney, 1945.

Also D. F. Thomson, "The Hero Cult, Initiation and Totemism on Cape York", *Journal, Royal Anthropological Institute*, Vol. LXIII, pp. 453-538; and "Notes on a Hero Cult from the Gulf of Carpentaria, North Queensland". *op. cit.* Vol. LXIV, pp. 217-236. A. W. Howitt, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, pp. 475-508.

796 it went to his Dreaming or spirit home to wait for the return of the
[775] animating spirit after the death and final burial of the individual.

Further, because of the original life-giving power of the "Mother",
[789] the ritual which included many dances referring to natural species,
was believed to ensure the normal cycle of the seasons. This, however,
did not occur directly as though the effect of increase rites, for the
ritual was not regarded as such; but just as, and while, men per-
[774] formed their ritual in the "Mother Place" to ensure their own births
and rebirths, so the "shades" of natural species performed their own
increase rites in the spirit-world.

The details on which this brief analysis was based suggested that
[177] the Kunapipi ritual as described by Professor Warner as part of the
Wawilak cycle and as having come from the south through the Rain-
barngo (Rembaranga) tribe (p. 452), was a most important cultural
element in Arnhem Land, the "pure" form of which must be sought
along the line of the "southern" rivers such as the Roper, Katherine
and Victoria.

In 1946, I worked for a short period amongst the tribes on the
177 Roper and Katherine and also visited north-east Arnhem Land, and
773 in 1947 and 1948 worked amongst the Mangarai and Alawa on the
796 Roper, and the Djauan and southern Rembaranga in southern
[114] Arnhem Land. While at Yirrkalla near Cape Arnhem in the north-
east corner of the region I saw the ceremonial ground with the
Nanggoru and Kanala where a Kunapipi ritual had been held some
weeks earlier, and obtained information which showed that it had
there coalesced with the Wauwalak (or Wawilak) myth, the very
"hut", in which the two sisters and the baby were swallowed by
Muit (Yurlunggur or Julunggul) the snake, being an important feature
in the ritual. Moreover, the tradition, as given to me, was that Moit,
that is the Wauwalak ritual, spreading south was met somewhere
about the Rose River —Nungubuyu tribal country —by the Kunapipi
ritual. For the people there, being afraid of his swallowing habits,
killed him, and made their own *mumuna*, Mother Dreaming. The
result is the present Kunapipi, with the Yermalindji—the Mother's
yam stick, and at the same time the Rainbow Snake's symbol—and
the Anggoru, the Mother's earth womb.

It was quite clear then that by 1946 the Kunapipi ritual had
[114] reached Arnhem Bay, and had done so since early 1929, for Professor
Warner wrote (p. 452) that it was not found in any of the clans
around Arnhem and Buckingham Bays, or on the islands of the
north-east though large numbers of the men from these districts
went south to take part in ritual with the clans of the same general
linguistic group who did possess it. Further, I was told in 1946 at
Elcho Island that a local man, Kumu, had brought the Kunapipi in
about 1929 to Elcho and other islands from Caledon Bay where he
saw it.

It seems then that the Gunabibi (Kunapipi) as Professor Warner 177
saw it after coming through the Rainbarnga and being amalgamated
with the Wauwalak, did not necessarily diffuse east to Melville and 773
Arnhem Bays, though the Wauwalak myth may have done so. It is 796
more likely that it spread there up the coast from the Rose River country; ultimately the "distributing" tribe was the same, the Rembaranga (Rainbarngo) and the fusion with the Wauwalak on the upper Goyder may have occurred before the Kunapipi reached Blue Mud Bay.

In 1946, while at Roper River Mission, I was given a detailed myth of the movement of the Mumuna (or Kunapipi group) and the ritual (with no trace of the Wauwalak myth) from Blue Mud Bay south along the coast to the Roper River, which was crossed about thirty
miles from its mouth, and shortly after, a Wadiri-Anyula man gave [115]
me an account of the journey of *Gilyeri-gilyeri mara-abana*, the
Travelling Woman, from the Roper, near the junction of the Limmen, and of the spread of the ritual, through the Alawa and on and on to Lake Woods and Newcastle Waters. Here the ritualists linked up with the route of diffusion from the Lower Victoria River through the Mudbara tribe and by Battle Creek.

This, incidentally, completed the circle of the Kunapipi route, for a study of the rituals and myths and traditions show that it also spread from the Victoria River east through the Wadman, Yangman and Mangarai territory and thence north to the Rembaranga, and on to Blue Mud Bay, and thence, as we have seen, south to the lower Roper, and so on to Newcastle Waters.

At the present time, too, some of the Kudjika songs of the Kunapipi of the Roper River side, which I heard at the Elsey, are on their [533]
way south-west through Warlock Ponds and then eventually to Wave Hill, west of Newcastle Waters, and on even to Wyndham, that is, to East Kimberley.

The doctrines are still very real to the initiated Mangarai, whom 773
I have come to know during the past three years. We talk about the
myth or ritual; we mention the sacred key and pass words referring 796
to the "Mother", the bullroarer, the Yalmanindji, the "river" and
"billabong" (womb) on the ritual ground, or we repeat the words of 171
the chants: but let anyone pass by even thirty yards away and out of [123]
earshot—the subject is dropped immediately, until that person has really gone by. And how interesting it is to hear on the Roper almost the same ritual words as obtain at Yirrkalla, and then to hear them again from Djauan and southern Rembaranga and others on the Mainoru, south of Bulman Gorge, and 100 miles west again not far from the Waterhouse! When I arrived at the latter place in September, 1948, a Kunapipi ritual had been completed only a few days before. I saw the headman and others who participated. There, too, was the Kanalina and the Anggorna (Nanggoru) with the

● 773 **Yeramalindji (Yalmanindji), a blackened mass, still in its original
shape, lying in the Nanggoru.**

796 One special feature of this "Mother Place" was that on each of the
171 walls of both the Kanalina (the oval billabong) and the Nanggoru
(the semi-circular trench or "river"), the rainbow serpent, here
[532] called Muit, was engraved. Apart from what informants said, there
[346] was no mistaking the drawing. The walls were of hard clay and about
2 feet and a little more in depth.

Finally, the "Mother" ritual has spread north from the Lower Victoria River as far as Port Keats, where in 1944 the elders were assimilating the doctrine of the "Old Woman" (exoterically), but the desirable mother (esoterically), and the bullroarer with snake symbolism.*

The Appeal of the Kunapipi

A cult which spreads throughout a vast region as indicated in the
771 above outline, and spreads irresistibly, must satisfy a spiritual or
psychological need and make a captivating appeal. There is no mis-
796 taking the grip which the doctrine of the "Mother" and the Snake
has on the initiated, or their fervour and faith. But, why does the
cult appeal and grip in this way?

Let us outline its significant features. It highlights the maternal,
nourishing, reproductive, and indeed creative, principle in nature and
man, though not denying the male principle. That is, it associates the
cycle of the tropical seasons, and the increase of human beings and of
natural species with the concept of Mother—of birth from the womb.
Further, it correlates this with sexual activity in which the male or
[831] inseminating principle is involved. In the former aspect, we have the
Mother, symbolized by the ceremonial "Mother Place", and in particular by the earth womb, the *nanggoru*, for, indeed, she is the earth.
In the latter case we see the symbolism of the Great Snake: the
Rainbow Snake, and the Yermalindji.

Further, in the ritual, the male actors simulate sex intercourse,
796 which symbolizes both the impregnation or else the quickening of
786 the Mother herself, and also the intercourse of the animals represented in the rite. It is done for her and through her for them and all
nature. Finally, the actual sexual intercourse between the actors and
selected women near the ceremonial ground, as part of the total
ritual, not only witnesses to the indispensable rôle of women in
reproduction, but also makes the "Mother's" life-producing principle or power operative. Just as in arid Australia, the actors cause
blood from their arm vein or genital organ to flow on to the symbolic representation of the totem or totemic ancestor, giving it or
[789] him power to increase its kind; so too in Arnhem Land the actors'

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* Mr. F. Parkes, a member of the Air Force, gained the confidence of these men, and recorded all he could.

786
sexual intercourse with the obvious representatives of the "Mother" 796
enable her to fulfil her important function. [789]

Thus, here as in the Ancient East, ritual sex-intercourse is a sacramental
act in the cult of the "Great Mother", on which her potency 773
and the survival of man and nature depend. In both regions we are 786
in the presence of a "Mystery Religion". The precious guarded 796
secret is only revealed to the initiated, the twice born, and that
secret, that "mystery", is the continuity of life. Life, however, is no 789
mere visible or external phenomenon. In all its forms it has a
spiritual counterpart, its "shade". The Cult Mother is more than the
Big Woman of the mythological period; she is eternal in the earth,
and present and active in her "shade" form in every Kunapipi. The
Great Snake, too, Muit or Yermalindji, is present in his symbols at
the ceremony, teaching the "reborn" through the traditional words
and ritual behaviour of the elders, speaking through them even as
the prophet and teacher is the voice of his God. The ritual or "wood"
shade, the spirit double of the initiand enters the bullroarer symbol
of the Mother and with it remains in her "earth womb" until it goes
to the spirit home. While the actors perform their rites to ensure the
birth and rebirth of mankind and the "increase" of the Great
Mother and the Great Snake as manifested in the rains and the consequent
fertility of the earth, the spirit-womb of the Mother is made
potent; in addition, as they represent in mime the behaviour of [825]
animals, reptiles, birds and insects, the "shades" of these creatures [774]
perform the increase ceremonies of their own kind in their own ritual
places in the spirit-sphere. Finally, the women who have co-operated
in the Kunapipi with their "outside" calls, responses, songs and
dance (like the Bundami or Awalambi), and who then take part in
the ritual intercourse with men from the Mother Place, become [775]
bearers of the latters' ritual or Kunapipi "shades"; at least, such is
the doctrine in the Roper River region.

So life is assured to man and nature for it is eternal in the spirit
world, in the Great Mother who brings forth and whose impregnating
symbol is the Great Snake, the iridescent rainbow which never [821]
fails to join the sky to the earth.

Such is the appeal of the cult. Its function in the social and
economic life of a food-gathering people in a tropical environment 114
can be studied, and indeed is obvious and logical. A most valuable 794
attempt to analyse the North-East Arnhem Land cults from this
point of view has already been made by Professor W. L. Warner in 796
A Black Civilization. But why should such a Fertility Goddess cult 177
arise in Arnhem Land and the Victoria River region, and not also in
the northern part of the Kimberley Division or in Cape York
Peninsula, where the tropical seasons and conditions of living for a
parasitic food-gathering people are similar? The answer probably
lies in the differences in external contacts. Here it is sufficient to say

114 that the several centuries of contact with Macassan and pre-Macassan
traders, fishers and sojourners which marked the Arnhem Land
177 coasts from the Victoria River right round to Groote Eylandt, were
794 not experienced in the other two tropical regions. It is, therefore,
possible that pre-Islamic religious influence was exerted on the
796 Aborigines, perhaps through individuals who accompanied the
Macassans and others to the islands to the north, for in some of
these, the earlier Hindu cults were cherished in spite of the proselytizing
nature of Islam. Moreover, the Mother cult-heroine is said in
[773] myths to have come through the sea, whether she be Kunapipi of the
Victoria and the Roper, or the Mother of the Iwaidja and other
tribes of Western Arnhem Land.*

Mana and Other Problems

The above is the general principle and question raised by the
114 Kunapipi cult. Mr. Berndt's book, however, in giving a description
778 and analysis of this cult, raises many other important matters. For
example, there is the problem of power or "grace" in religion, indicated
in north-east Arnhem Land by the term *dal*. It is the anthropological
problem of *mana* over again. It operates through the Mother
[776] or through Ancestral Beings who in their "spirit parts" are present
in the ritual. But does the ritual automatically release that power, setting it in motion for the welfare of man and nature? Or is it manifested through life and increase by the will of the Mother or other Being in response to the ritual? Obviously, according to the doctrine, it cannot operate apart from such Being or Beings. Indeed, is it not that Being in activity or rather in relation to man and nature—an activity and presence realized in ritual? Problems associated with the Doctrine of the Trinity are not peculiar to Christianity.

114 Mr. Berndt agrees with Professor Warner that the Aborigines are
not ignorant of physiological paternity. The ritual supports this contention.
842 True, these natives hold also the doctrine of pre-existence,
796 of spirit-children who enter the mothers for incarnation. But, what
this entry does is to provide the "shade", the eternal spirit-part, and so give life to that which is already in the womb, as the result of sexual intercourse. Intercourse does not merely prepare the way for the entry of the child-spirit and for its subsequent birth; this is the usual view. In addition, it is followed by the formation of the foetus

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* The point of entry of the Fertility Mother cult of north-western Arnhem Land is definitely placed by the Aborigines and their song cycles in the Coburg Peninsula. The Kunapipi cult, however, seems to be distinct from this, and while I incline to find its point of distribution in the lower Victoria region, the final decision must wait for more research in the field and further analysis of the material already in hand. Mr. Berndt's maps in this volume refer only to the recent and present movement of Kunapipi songs, the movement west from the Roper being a return along a song route to a western point of distribution, and not necessarily diffusion from a point of entry at the mouth of the Roper.

PREFACE

The main purpose of this work is to indicate some fundamental
features of an Australian Aboriginal religious cult, the Kunapipi, in 121
one particular area. North-eastern Arnhem Land has been selected,
not because it presents a more exotic background or more spectacular 794
ceremonies, but because the cult as seen here is fairly well
defined, and because its religious concepts are important and significant
to the people concerned. In this region there are several
fairly well integrated religious cults, having a common theme and
fundamental intent. Most of them, however, have complex local
associations, whereas the Kunapipi ceremonies, which have been
introduced into north-east Arnhem Land, belong to a configuration
which is still widely diffused throughout the Northern Territory.

The plan is to examine the cult as seen in this one region, to consider
its relative importance in adjacent areas, and so prepare the 121
way for a more intensive analysis of it in the central-western part
of the Northern Territory. Although introduced, the Kunapipi has 177
become closely associated with more truly north-east Arnhem Land
mythology, in particular, the Wauwalak, which is used to explain it;
but the Wauwalak mythology itself was at some time diffused into
north-eastern Arnhem Land, apparently from the same direction as
this much later ritual.

The Kunapipi songs of Yirrkalla (in north-east Arnhem Land)
have been derived from those commonly in use further south. By [533]
examining relevant songs and mythology of adjacent areas, it is
possible to trace the movement and diffusion of this cult from one
group to another, and to discuss (for instance) the source of the
Yirrkalla Kunapipi. This is not really difficult, for the Kunapipi (in
all the regions mentioned in this work) possesses the common theme
of a Great Mother, expressed as either a single or a dual personality, [776]
her power being extended to her daughters, the Wauwalak,
Ka'lerika'lering or Mungamunga. She is said to be responsible for the
constant fertility of human beings and other natural species, and the [842]
continuing sequence of the seasons, as well as for the general similarity
of her ritual, emblems and songs. In addition, certain "key"
words, which are sacred, are used widely to designate ceremonies, [192]
objects and sacred beings.

What does this cult mean to its postulants? Why does it exist? 771 794
What do the people themselves believe that they are receiving from 796
it? Its basic intent seems to express the latent or conscious desires of 121 773

121 the individuals who combine to form the social group that carries
773 out these ceremonies. And if this be so, does the cult adequately fulfil
the wishes of the people, or do they feel that something is lacking?
794 All this raises a variety of problems, of which only a few can be
796 treated here. But to understand Aboriginal religion, its belief and
771 rites, it is essential to have thorough knowledge of the mythology
and songs of at least one particular cult. It is not enough merely to observe rituals performed on the sacred ground, and then to theorize from such observations; for Aboriginal sacred ritual is an acting out of mythology, and mythology, in turn, is recorded in elaborate and detailed song cycles which enshrine the meaning and significance of the ritual. Therefore, conclusions can be reached only after an analysis of these three aspects: ritual, mythology and song. This implies that the doctrines, intent and function of a specific religious cult, such as the Kunapipi, may be derived from analysis of the mythological, historical and present-day data available to the field-worker, especially as the cult is still a functioning element in the life of the people. From these we may arrive at some general conclusions concerning
121 the essential nature of Australian Aboriginal religion. Such
771 conclusions, however, do not necessarily provide a basis for interpreting "primitive" religion generally, nor a peg upon which to hang theories relating to the origin of religion. Indeed, it is unwise to describe Australian Aboriginal religion by that controversial and dubious term, "primitive". Aboriginal religious concepts, like those of Europe, have been changing through the ages in association with the cultural needs of the people. In the process, Aboriginal religion has developed into a mature and vivid faith, mediated through beliefs and rites, and giving to its adherents a deep satisfaction and happiness.

The whole question of Australian Aboriginal religion needs far
121 more consideration than has been accorded it to date:[1] but before
771 any reliable theoretical studies can be made, it is essential that anthropological
794 field-workers should provide considerably more data than
are at present available. Here, in this volume, is a study of one religious cult. But it should be kept in mind that this work deals with only one cult in one region, with reference to its diffusion in adjacent areas; other cults exist side by side with the Kunapipi, and still others are found in various parts of Aboriginal Australia. Whether all these cults are basically similar, and have a common intent and function within the separate native cultures, or whether they are fundamentally dissimilar, has yet to be determined.

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[1] E.g. E. Durkheim, *Les Formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse*, Paris, 1912; H. Hubert and M. Mauss, *Essai sur la nature et la fonction du sacrifice, Mélanges d'histoire des religions*, Paris, 1909; R. H. Lowie, *Primitive Religion*, New York, 1924; G. Róheim, *Australian Totemism*, London, 1925, and *Animism, Magic, and the Divine King*, New York, 1930; P. Radin, *Primitive Religion, its Nature and Origin*, New York, 1937.

121 consequently irreligious. Woman, or more precisely her unique
562 ability to create, together with man's power to inseminate, has
771 become a feature of native religion in these areas, crystallized in the
concept of the Mother, whom we see manifested in (for instance) the
796 Kunapipi. The aura thus surrounding, and radiating from, this
[831] Fertility Mother has been extended in some degree to native women
[776] to-day.

Another problem arising from the study of the Kunapipi cult
121 which needs detailed consideration, is that of individual origins.
Throughout the greater part of the Territory, specific cults have been
794 inspired either by one or, in some cases, by two or three Ancestral
773 Beings. Through their own personality and power, it is said, they
succeeded in indoctrinating the whole social group in which they
776 found themselves. They brought with them what appear to have been
new ideologies, with attendant ritual, emblems, songs, and mythology in which they themselves now play a dominant part. This individual aspect is apparent in the case of the Kunapipi Mother, who arose from the waters of the Roper River Mouth (*vide* Chapter XI), bringing with her the main features of what we now call the Kunapipi cult. The same principle is evident in the appearance of the Djanggawul (*vide* Chapter I) and of Laintjung (Chapter I) in north-eastern Arnhem Land; both these Beings appear to have inspired virile cults, substantiated by mythology which details their adventures, their activities and beliefs. The society itself, of course, must have been more or less receptive to the introduction of these religious
beliefs. That is to say, the religious leader, whether Kunapipi,
[182] Laintjung or the Djanggawul Brother or Sisters, was able to impress
his (or her) own point of view on that society, which in turn was willing to adopt his views and ideas, so giving social impetus to the introduced religion.

This aspect of individual origins, in relation to specific Australian Aboriginal cults, is an important one. The contention, which may be substantiated by mythology and the traditional song-cycles, is that a powerful personality—such as the Great Mother, the acknowledged spiritual leader and inspiration of the Kunapipi cult—possessed of ability beyond the ordinary, can and does exert his or her influence on the society in which he is either temporarily or permanently living; and that influence, helped by favourable circumstances, is sufficient to establish a cult which attracts adherents, and becomes in its own right an important social function and institution.

121 The migration of Ancestral Beings, like Kunapipi and others, into
771 a particular society, bringing with them a religious cult, is a fairly
773 general phenomenon in Aboriginal religious life. Major Ancestral
794 Beings very rarely arise in the country of the people with whom they
are mythologically associated, or in the society which serves as the
776 "incubator" for their specific ideology. Rather, the individual (in

the guise of an Ancestral Being) is the proselytizer, the carrier of the 121
germ of a religious idea, which is adopted by, and modified to suit, 771
the social group in which he finds himself. Whether he brought with 776
him the ingredients of that religion from his own "home", or whether 794
it took shape in consequence of his contact with the alien people, is a 773
matter for conjecture.

The diffusion of Aboriginal religious cults, such as the Kunapipi, 177
also presents some interesting features. A certain amount of more or
less "pure" evangelization has occurred in this respect; individual 794
cult leaders, of both historic and contemporary society, have been 797
interested in furthering the activities of the cult. But in their successful and unsuccessful attempts to introduce their particular beliefs into other groups, they take only the basis of their cult life, and do not as a rule attempt to superimpose their own cultural ideas and organization. In north-eastern Arnhem Land, for example, the Kunapipi,
recognized by natives themselves as an introduced theme, has been [182]
fairly well integrated with existing social organization, religious life,
and secular beliefs; even its mythology has been altered to meet the demands of local ethics, while the alien songs are interpreted in the light of indigenous criteria. Nevertheless, the basic ideology and construction of the Kunapipi cult remain: and it is this aspect which
really concerns the proselytizer. The same process may be observed [171]
in other regions, such as western Arnhem Land, the Daly River-
Port Keats area, and west-central Northern Territory.

* * * *

A word should be said concerning the presentation of Kunapipi 128
Song Cycles (that is, in Chapters VII, VIII, X, and XI). Their value
lies in their substantiation of the cult's doctrine, explaining its outward expression in ritual and in the use of ceremonial emblems and objects. Such traditional songs ensure that the original intent of the cult is not lost or radically misinterpreted. To-day, however, misinterpretation is possible as a result of conflicting loyalties arising from the contact of Aboriginal with European culture. In order to restrict ourselves to the literal interpretation of these songs, it has been found necessary to present them with an interlinear translation, a general rendering, and a brief commentary based on native interpretation: this method makes available the maximum amount of
data. The phonetic script used conforms to that of the International [104]
Phonetic Association,[2] amended for use in Australia by Dr. A. Capell.[3]
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[2] G. Noel-Armfield, *General Phonetics*, 1931, pp. 21-23. *Vide* R. and C. Berndt, "A Preliminary Report of Field-Work in the Ooldea Region, Western South Australia", *Oceania Bound Reprint*, Sydney, 1945, pp. 262-264, or *Oceania*, Vol. XV, No. 1, pp. 50-52.

[3] A. Capell, *Methods and Materials for Recording Australian Languages*, Sydney, 1945 (reprinted from *Oceania*, Vol. XVI, No. 2, pp. 144-176). Since the complete phonetic script was not available for rendering native words in this volume, some equivalents in ordinary English lettering have been used.

are collectively known as Mi:woitj *mata*. Throughout the whole area 614 the territory is divided between a number of clans, some of which 618 have become extinct, while others have had their population seriously diminished. 197 These clans have allocated to them certain *mata* (or linguistic groups), which may be interchangeable between clans belonging to the same patrilineal moiety. There is a pronounced emphasis on the importance of the *mata*, each of which exists as an almost independent unit. Again, many of these *mata*, like the *mala*, have become extinct or been absorbed by more powerful groups. They are of patrilineal descent, but there is a strong tendency for a person to feel some attachment to the *mata* and *mala* of his mother and mother's brother. These *mata* and *mala* belong exclusively either to the *dua* or to the *jiritja* moiety, and there is no variation in the use of these terms throughout the whole area.

The moiety is the most important control in the social organization of the Wulamba bloc: it divides all *mata* and *mala*, the whole 616 life of the people and the known universe, into two groups, and affiliates all those belonging to one moiety. The moieties are exogamous, so that they remain the basis upon which marriage rules depend. All the *dua* people, for example, are *dua'kundit* (i.e. of one family) and the *jiritja* people, *jiritja'kundit*. This division of the people into moieties is said to have begun in the Eternal Dreaming [773] Period, when the Djanggawul Beings removed from their uteri the first male and female predecessors of the present-day groups. Although Djanggawul themselves were *dua*, they were able to define the two moieties in their progeny. But Laintjung, being the chief *jiritja* Ancestral Being and a contemporary of the Djanggawul, assumed also the responsibility for establishing the *jiritja* moiety. The esoteric significance of the terms *jiritja* and *dua* is to-day unknown, although old and reliable aborigines state that both these moiety terms convey the meaning of metamorphosis: that is, they refer to a state of transition from the period in which the great Ancestral and Spirit Beings lived (i.e. the Totemic era), to the development of man as he is in this age.

These people also have a term, *jutu'indi*, which refers to all *dua* and *jiritja* people together, and not merely to a tribe consisting of both moieties, as the Wulamba. *Jutu'indi* is the concept of moiety unity, and may be loosely translated as "beginning"; for the people themselves say, "it is *jutu'indi* because, if I'm *dua*, *jiritja* is my mother, *dua* my daughter and son, and we are all one. . . ." But *jutu'indi* refers principally to members of inter-marrying *mata*, and not always [614] to *mata* in outlying areas: that is, it is apt to have a restricted connotation.

Another interesting aspect of these moieties is that the *dua* seems to be associated with the ancient and purely indigenous belief, ritual and ceremony of the people, while the *jiritja* is concerned more

616 with introduced or external themes. The Djanggawu[1] and Wauwalak
[776] Spirit Beings, the guardians of the most sacred and esoteric ritual,
are *dua*, while Laintjung, Baijini, Macassan and Badu mythology,
[773] ritual, songs and belief are *jiritja*.[2]

As we have said, the *mala* and *mata* belong either to one moiety
614 or to the other; but detailed topographical maps of the region
197 reveal that clan territories are very elastic, so that isolated sites
relating to one moiety may exist in the clan country of the opposite
616 moiety, and so on. Further, the traditional home territory of one
[423] group may be situated elsewhere than it is to-day. This is often discovered only by analysis of clan mythology and its relationship to that of other clans, and the inclusion of linguistic groups in clans which originally were not associated with these particular *mata*. The whole study of clan and linguistic group organization is extremely complicated. We shall, however, mention several of the best known of these, in order to demonstrate their complexity: it is not necessary, for the purpose of this work, to deal with them in any detail.

Dalwongu is a *jiritja mata*, that means "Spring water flowing after
614 rain and the swamp bird, *wanba*, calling out when he sees it". It
616 belongs not only to the Nungulrulpoi (meaning "a shoal of *gunbirawi*
young mullet") whose alternate name is Numbiripala (meaning
192 "those who subincise", that is, they are influenced from Rose River: *vide* the body of this work), or Malar'watjeri (i.e. "the clan of the subincision"), but to others. These particular Dalwongu are distinguished from the others by the "heavy" quality of their language. Allied to this Dalwongu *mata*, within this particular *mala*, are the Kalaulwun (meaning "the *wanba* bird in the bamboo tree") and Mararba (that is, "the *wanba* bird") *mata*, who belong also to other *mala* and not only to the Nungulrulpoi. The alternate term for the *mala*, Malar'watjeri, is used also as a separate *mala*, and its *mata* are Dalwongu, Bilmalandji ("paperbark near the salt water") and Di:agoi (meaning "paperbark"): this Dalwongu group is allied to the first, and to the other *mata* which are rightfully Malar'watjeri.

Another Dalwongu group belongs to the Ngelkala *mala* (meaning

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[113] [2] *Vide* R. and C. Berndt, Sacred Figures of Ancestral Beings of Arnhem Land, *Oceania*, Vol. XVIII, No. 4, pp. 309–326, 2 plates and text figures; Secular Figures of North-Eastern Arnhem Land, *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 51, No. 2; R. Berndt, A Wonguri-Mandjikai Song Cycle of the Moon Bone, *Oceania*, Vol. XIX, No. 1, pp. 16–50; Badu, Islands of the Spirits, *Oceania*, Vol. XIX, No. 2, pp. 93–103, plate; C. Berndt, Expressions of Grief Among Aboriginal Women, *Oceania*, Vol. XX, No. 4, pp. 286–332; R. and C. Berndt, Discovery of Pottery in North-Eastern Arnhem Land, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, Vol. LXXVII, Part 2; A. P. Elkin, R. and C. Berndt, *Art in Arnhem Land*, F. W. Cheshire, Melbourne, and University of Chicago Press, 1950; R. Berndt, *Djanggawul*, for publication (a detailed study of the Djanggawul religious cult of north-eastern Arnhem Land); R. Berndt, *Daughters of the Sun* (a further study of the Djanggawul cult from the north-central Arnhem Land point of view), for publication; R. and C. Berndt, *Arnhem Land, Its History and Its People* (F. W. Cheshire, for publication); R. Berndt, *Love Songs of Arnhem Land* (sexual behaviour in north-eastern Arnhem Land), volume for publication.

tion of other natural species—all phenomena which are necessary for 771
the continuance and well-being of the people themselves. In keeping 789
with this doctrine, a natural development has been the stress on pro-
creation—the importance of pregnancy and child-birth, and the 794
essential sequence of sexual intercourse and conception, expressed [842]
particularly in ritual and long song cycles.

In order to understand Kunapipi cult life and belief, it is necessary to summarize very briefly some of the other cults which flourish beside it in this area.

The Djanggawul myth, consisting of several hundreds of lengthy 773
songs, relates the adventures of two men and two women, who in
the Dreaming Period landed at Port Bradshaw, on the north-east [533]
Arnhem Land coast. They had journeyed across the sea from an
island called Bralku, now known as the *dua* home of the dead, some-
where beyond Groote Eylandt. These Ancestral Beings are known
generally as the Djanggawul, but had their own personal names.
The leader was Djanggawul himself; the two women were his
sisters, the younger Maralaitj, and the older Pildjiwuraroiju; and
their companion was Bralbral, who plays only a minor part in this
great cycle. In their canoe they brought a large conical *ngainmara*
mat, which is now used particularly by the women, and also certain [778]
sacred *rangga* sticks possessing life-giving qualities. The mat sym- [831]
bolized the uterus; the *rangga* sticks were penes, and when not being
used ritually, were kept hidden in the *ngainmara*.

As the Djanggawul journeyed along the coast, they met other
Ancestral Beings like Laintjung and the Baijini, and Spirits such as [776]
Pomapoma, Kultana, Woijal, Burulu-burulu and others; but none
of these had the procreating powers of the great Djanggawul.
Djanggawul had an elongated penis; and his two sisters had long [831]
clitori which dragged on the ground as they walked. Djanggawul had
sexual relations with his sisters, so that they were continually preg-
nant. From time to time, at the camps where they stayed, he would
lift their clitori to one side, and put his hand up into the uteri to
remove many children of both sexes: these were the ancestors of the
present aborigines. The song cycle features the perpetual pregnancy 773
of the two sisters, their uteri being likened to the *ngainmara* mats 533
which they brought with them, while the people who are removed
from them in childbirth are the *rangga*. It is said that a person's
bones are like *rangga*, inherited from both the father and mother, [827]
who in turn inherited theirs through the generations of ancestors,
right back to the Eternal Times of Djanggawul and the creative
heroes. Therefore, at death, a person's material remains, as well as
his spiritual substance, must be treated with respect, and surrounded [764]
by ritual.

An important aspect of this myth, second only to the theme of 773
fertility, concerns the institution of sacred ritual. In the beginning, 796

773 so it relates, the Djanggawul sisters themselves were the sole guardians
of the religious objects and associated ceremonies. They were
796 well acquainted with all the sacred ritual and doctrine, because this
intimately concerned them; the symbols they used, and their actions
in dancing, made reference to the sexual act, to pregnancy and birth.
Aboriginal men to-day speak definitely on this point: "Then we
had nothing: no sacred objects, no sacred ceremonies, the women
had everything." So one day, the myth continues, the men stole the
women's objects while they were out collecting mussels; they took
them back to their own camp, and there performed the special sacred
dancing. The Djanggawul sisters, coming back with their shellfish,
found that their *rangga* had disappeared. They heard, in the distance,
the singing of the men; and finally they decided that perhaps it was
just as well that the men had taken their *rangga*. It would save them
a lot of trouble, they agreed; now the men could carry out most of
the ritual for them, while they busied themselves chiefly with
raising families and collecting food. In this way, their true function
as Fertility Mothers became established. Such an attitude is not confined
[171] to north-eastern Arnhem Land, but appears in the mythology
of other Australian Aboriginal tribes. However, women still play
[562] an important part in sacred ritual, for instance in the Kunapipi.

This is a brief summary of the complete version, which gives in
616 detail the main theology of the *dua* moiety. To both *dua* and *jiritja*
796 men and women it is of major importance, for men of both moieties
take part in the *dua nara* ceremonies, although *dua* men alone are the
leaders, singers and principal dancers. The Djanggawul ritual is
concerned with "higher" religious thought, and most of it with
sacred dancing on a sacred ground where a *nara* "shade" or hut has
been constructed. This hut represents the womb; in it the *rangga*
are stored, and from it men emerge, to posture and dance ritually
while holding them.

616 If the Djanggawul are important to the *dua*, Laintjung and his son
Banaitja are equally so to the *jiritja* group of clans who hold the
773 *jiritja nara* ceremonies. The Male Ancestral Beings Laintjung and
Banaitja, with certain female counterparts, dominate *jiritja* religious
ideology; but their mythology is not nearly so vivid as that of the
Djanggawul, nor are their ceremonies so important. Laintjung came
from the sea near Blue Mud Bay, and established his cult. There, and
at nearby places, he distributed sacred totemic designs to *jiritja*
clans; he had also brought with him sacred *rangga*, the *jiritja* "high"
totems, which he gave into the custody of the clans. Although much
[789] of the Laintjung ritual also relates to the increase of the natural
species, most is only indirectly related to fertility.

When his father died, Banaitja desired to broaden and put into
practice some of Laintjung's religious concepts; but his efforts
aroused general antagonism, and at last he was put to death. Later,

however, the people to whom Laintjung had given his sacred designs 616
and *rangga* were sorry for what they had done, and made the "likeness" 773
of Banaitja in paperbark bound on a framework of cane. The
influence of Laintjung and Banaitja, in spite of their importance, did [171]
not cover such a wide area as that of some other Ancestral Beings;
and the aborigines account for this by explaining that Banaitja
"was killed at an early age, before he had the opportunity of travelling
widely throughout this region".

Most of the great religious myths of this region are associated
with the *dua* moiety, the more conservative section; it is the *jiritja* [177]
which embraces new and "alien" ideas and activities. From time to 773
time, fully-initiated *dua* and *jiritja* men are shown the "high" 616
rangga, and through the years they become increasingly familiar
with the complex ritual. This admission to sacred knowledge, however, 561
is not thought comparable to an initiation or age-grading 796
ceremony: it is more in the nature of a revelation through which
they become acquainted with the inner substance of religious thought
and expression. The *dua* Wauwalak myth, on the other hand, is of
general importance, and is associated with the three sacred "age-grading"
ceremonies of this north-eastern region. There is also much
sacred ritual not concerned with age-grading. Both *dua* and *jiritja*
men take part in this, and it incorporates some purely *jiritja* songs [533]
belonging to separate cycles.

The two Wauwalak sisters are associated with the concept of 773
fertility, owing mainly to their connection with birth, after-birth
blood, and menstruation. The latter receives a great deal of attention 796
in Yirrkalla thought. Aboriginal women are all potential [841]
Wauwalaks; and a great deal of their behaviour, particularly at
puberty, and when menstruation ceases at pregnancy, is said to be
based on that of the Two Sisters. The Wauwalak myth is most
important to these north-eastern Arnhem Landers, and they make
frequent references to it. It has, as mentioned, far more general
application than have the Djanggawul and Laintjung cycles; and the
three separate ceremonies which concern it here are each of a different
nature. The commonest is the *djunggawon*, used primarily for
initiation; ideally, it extends over a couple of months, and includes, [881]
in addition to circumcision and camp dancing, a certain amount of
ritual which is not fully revealed, as in the case of the Djanggawul.
The second of these three ceremonies is the *kunapipi*, which will be
dealt with in the following chapters. The third is the *ngu:rlmak*
ceremony, performed to-day only at rare intervals. It is considered
to be far more important than either the *djunggawon* or the *kunapipi*,
but less so than the Djanggawul and Laintjung *dua* and *jiritja nara*
rituals.

There are also a number of subsidiary ceremonies, related in some
degree to these two main cycles, but not by any means so outstanding.

CHAPTER II

KUNAPIPI, THE SACRED CULT

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Throughout Arnhem Land, and the Northern Territory south of Yirrkalla, around and below the Roper River; west across the plains and swamps of the Buffalo country to the Daly River, and beyond, towards Port Keats and Timber Creek, and further west into Western Australia: south-west into the central cattle country around Victoria River Downs, Wave Hill, Gordon Downs, towards Hall's Creek in the Eastern Kimberleys; through inhospitable desert regions around Tanami and the Granites, and eastwards across the main North-South Road; through the tribal territories of groups with differing cultures and language—the sacred name of Kunapipi is known.

The Kunapipi Cult is diffused over an immense area, and is known sometimes by alternate names; but though its rituals and ceremonies may differ in some minor points, and its doctrine may vary, its intent remains fundamentally the same, and its background is similar throughout all these areas.

In north-eastern Arnhem Land, the name Kunapipi expresses a dual concept: on the one hand it refers to a Fertility Mother, or Mothers, and on the other to the great Rainbow Snake. This is the symbolism of the Uterus and the Penis, natural instruments of fecundity. In other areas, such as the Daly River, or central-western Northern Territory, the term Kunapipi (although still known) changes to Kalwadi, or to Kadjari, translated into English as "Old Woman", or described as "Mother belonging to you and me". In the north-western and central-western regions of the Northern Territory, more stress is placed on the concept of a Fertility Mother, and less on the Rainbow Snake. In the Milingimbi region, when discussing the Kunapipi,[1] Professor Lloyd Warner accentuates the importance of the great Rock Pythons who swallowed the Wauwalak Sisters, but overlooks the underlying significance of the Two Sisters as Fertility Mothers.

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Throughout the areas mentioned, a basic feature of Aboriginal religion is the belief in an Original Mother (or Mothers), herself a Creative Being and the essence of fertility and abundance. In western Arnhem Land the Mother is the inspiration and sponsor of the *u:ba:r* (equivalent to the north-eastern Arnhem Land *uwar* of the

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[1] L. Warner, *A Black Civilization*, 1937, pp. 290–311, and 372–375.

ngu:rlmak ritual) and *ma'ralin* cults;[2] on Bathurst and Melville Islands 171
the Earth Mothers are said to have brought into being the human
and natural species, and to have introduced their system of social 776
organization. The now virtually extinct Laraki:a shared this same 794
cult; and so did the Daly River people who built circular stone 773
structures to symbolize the wombs of their creative Mothers.[*] The cult of Kalwadi is still strong in the north-western quarter of the Territory; as the Kadjari, it spreads down to the central-west, where it is met by another Kadjari cult from the Tanami-Granites desert, and the Billaluna region in Western Australia.

This Mother[3] is always present behind the ritual, the dancing and the singing. She is a symbol of the productive qualities of the earth, the eternal replenisher of human, animal and natural resources; it was from her uterus that human and totemic beings came forth. She has no totem herself, nor is she a totemic concept; she does not herself perform totemic ritual, although her neophytes do. In these areas, she is the background of all totemic ceremony, an "eternal" explanation and symbol of the Aboriginal way of life, with its continual expectation of rebirth.

In her sacred mythology she may be alone, or may appear as Two Sisters; or, in some areas, the Two Sisters may be described as her daughters. For example, from the Roper River westwards, through the Victoria River district into Western Australia, her daughters are the exotic and beautiful Mungamunga, representing an ideal of young aboriginal womanhood. Although the Mungamunga are themselves associated with their Mother in sacred ritual (see Chapters X and XI), they do not play an important part; they are concerned principally with secret magico-religious ceremonies of women, and with love magic of both sexes.

The Mother herself, Kunapipi, Kalwadi or Kadjari, is represented in certain parts of the mythology as a perpetually pregnant woman, who in the Dream-Time let out from her uterus human beings, the progenitors of the present natives. She was responsible too for sending out spirits of the natural species from season to season, to ensure their continual increase. In this she did not act entirely alone, but in association with a Rainbow Snake, the symbolic Penis, which completed the dual concept. This aspect is particularly important, for it reflects the part played by the male in fertilization.

In a remarkable series of drawings from central-western Northern

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[2] *Vide* R. and C. Berndt, *Sexual Behaviour in Western Arnhem Land* (volume to be published by the Viking Fund Publications in Anthropology, New York), Chapter IV, Sections I to VIII.

[*] Knut Dahl, *In Savage Australia*, London, 1926, pp. 233-4, figs. 9-10 This writer records stone structures in the vicinity of the Mary River, in "Buffalo country", west of the western Arnhem Land fringe.

[3] *Vide* R. and C. Berndt, The Eternal Ones of the Dream, *Oceania*, Vol. XVII, No. 1, pp. 67-78, illustrated (3 plates).

171 Territory,[4] artists depict human beings, as totemites, flowing from
794 the uterus of the Mother into the round "ring place" (or ceremonial
ground) for the performance of sacred rites. The "ring place" is
773 itself the uterus of the Mother. To-day, in the really important sacred
776 ceremonies, a special ring place is used for the performance of these
rituals. As the neophytes leave the camp for the sacred ground, they
[778] themselves are said to become increasingly sacred, and to enter the
Mother: they go into her uterus, the ring place, as happened in the
beginning. When the ritual is completed the Mother "lets them out";
they emerge from the ring place, and pass once more into ordinary
life. These ring places vary in shape from place to place, but all symbolize
the Mother's uterus. The sacred ceremonies associated with
[778] this Fertility Woman are called in pidgin English "Big Sunday",
inferring a sacred atmosphere from the European connotation of the
word Sunday, while the term refers also to "sandy place", the soft
ground upon which the sacred dancing is performed. The appellation
"Big Sunday", in some regions, may also be derived from the term
"Centre" place, which refers to the sacred ceremonial ground.

All Kunapipi ritual, irrespective of region, has thus a common
796 theme. We find in it the return to the Mother's uterus, and the
794 eventual emergence, when the postulants come out from their sacred
ritual refreshed, and as "new" men (that is, it is like a "rebirth"):
771 this symbolic enactment of birth brings with it a renewal of ideals,
energy and faith. Fertility and the supplying of food, sexual pleasure
831 and satisfaction, solidarity within the group, and an undividing
faith in the divine truth of the cult—all these elements are present.
Food and sex, fundamental in human life, and consequently in
religion, owe their continuance, it is said, to the Eternal Mother.
It is not surprising that people living in such close proximity to
nature, with few artificial distractions, should recognise the fundamental
importance of female fertility, and see in it a central theme of
religion.

* * * *

171 In north-eastern Arnhem Land, the Kunapipi cult is not yet
deeply entrenched, since it has been introduced within comparatively
794 recent times. Its earliest infiltration took place through the Reinbaranga
(sometimes termed Rembranga, and localized in southwestern
177 Arnhem Land) and Burera tribes and so into Milingimbi,
where Professor L. Warner witnessed some of its rituals twenty years
ago. From this centre it spread westwards towards Goulburn
Islands and Oenpelli,[5] and eastwards to Elcho Island and Arnhem
Bay. But it does not seem to have gripped, at that time, the imagina-

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[4] *Vide* R. and C. Berndt, *op. cit. Oceania*, Vol. XVII, No. 1, Plates I to III; and R. and C. Berndt, Aboriginal Art in Central-Western Northern Territory, *Meanjin*, Spring, 1950, pp. 183–188, ten plates.

[5] R. and C. Berndt, *Sexual Behaviour in Western Arnhem Land*, Chapter IV, Section IX.

tion of the people further east, around Yirrkalla, Cape Arnhem and 171
Caledon Bay.
It was not until perhaps fifteen years ago that the cult gradually 794
spread northwards from Rose River, where its custodians were the 177
Nungguboiju group who had obtained it from the Roper River
people, particularly from the Mangarei-Ma :ra-Alawa tribes. The
Lultma'rangu (*dua* moiety), Dalwongu and Mararba (*jiritja* moiety)
linguistic groups were the first to come within its influence; they
mixed with people from Rose River to perform Kunapipi ceremonies
around Caledon and Blue Mud Bays, and occasional Kunapipi
rituals were held round about Yirrkalla.

But although these people did perform the Kunapipi at relevant 171
seasons, this did not take the place of indigenous religious belief and
practice. The great ceremonies of the *dua* and *jiritja* moiety *nara* were 77
still the most important; and the *djunggawon* and *ngu:rlmak* rituals, 616
associated with the two Wauwalak Sisters and the Rock Pythons, 794
retained their importance in the minds of the north-eastern people. 796
Kunapipi in this area was subsidiary, whereas in most of the other
areas mentioned above her rituals held a paramount position.

The introduced Kunapipi cult brought with it all its attendant 177
ritual and ceremonial activity, but apparently its original mythology
(see Chapters IX and X) became merged with that of the Wauwalak.[6] 184
It was, in consequence, more readily accepted by the local people, 773
for the Wauwalak myth-cycle embraces much of the indigenous
religion. Thus, instead of becoming just another introduced ceremony, 794
the Kunapipi became a cult associated with a series of cults, having 796
roots in indigenous mythology. The Wauwalak mythology had much
in common with that of the southern Kunapipi. Both possessed the
same concept of fertility. The Wauwalak sisters became indirectly
the dual Mothers, continually replenishing the earth with human [776]
beings and with the natural species. Even the Rainbow Snake was
presnt, i e the form of the Rock Pythons, who finally swallowed the
Sisters. Fundamentally, too, the arrangement of the sacred dancing
ground, and much of the incidental ceremony (when the special
Kunapipi objects are not used) are similar to those of the *djunggawon*
and *ngu:rlmak* rituals.

One aspect of the Kunapipi is slightly at variance with local 773
indigenous belief. In north-eastern Arnhem Land the Fertility 776
Mothers are the sisters of Djanggawul, Pildjiwuraroiju and Miralaitj.
The Wauwalak, although associated with the idea of fertility, are not 184
concerned with human or animal creation: they are said to be the 794
daughters of the elder Djanggawul sister, removed from her uterus
by her Brother. According to conventional Kunapipi mythology,

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6. The Wauwalak mythology itself was introduced much earlier into north-eastern Arnhem Land, its original source being found in the mythology of the Kunapipi: *vide* Chapters IX and X.

184 the Mother (or Mothers), represented quite often by Two Sisters
even in central-western Northern Territory, is the creative Being;
773 so from this point of view the Wauwalak cycle, now substantiating
776 the introduced Kunapipi, should possess Two Sisters who are them-
selves creative Beings. Local belief however accords this status only
794 to the Djanggawul; but since the Wauwalak are their daughters, the
original doctrine is not greatly inconvenienced. The creative Mothers
may still be the Djanggawul, making their appearance through the
Wauwalak Sisters, while the Wauwalak themselves are the Munga-
munga of the south.

The actual meaning of the name Kunapipi is not easy to discover.
773 The cult itself, with its relevant ceremonies, and the myth that sub-
794 stantiates the ritual, is Kunapipi, and this, in most areas mentioned
796 above, is translated as the "Mother", or "Old Woman". The term
"old" in this context signifies status and age, although not elderly
appearance. Dr. Warner[7] notes that Kunapipi (spelt "Gunabibi") is
[114] one name of the Pythons which swallowed the Wauwalak; but, as
mentioned above, this writer stresses the importance of the Snakes
at the expense of the Fertility Mothers, and this element is by far the
most apparent in north-eastern Arnhem Land religion.

192 At Yirrkalla, the name Kunapipi is said to have two meanings.
304 First, the word Kunapipi means "whistle-cock" (that is, a sub-
83 incisure); for these ceremonies came up from the Rose and the
[171] Roper Rivers where subincision is general, whereas throughout the
greater part of north-eastern Arnhem Land only circumcision is
practised. The ceremonies of Kunapipi in the Yirrkalla region may
also be termed *wiri:i* or *wira'i*, meaning "incisure". But Kunapipi
means also the uterus of the Mother. That is, the incised penis symbolizes the snake (Python or Rainbow Snake), and the incisure itself the uterus. Symbolically, then, the subincised male member represents both the female and the male organs, essential in the process of fructification.

More generally, however, the term Kunapipi is said to mean the Mother, and in isolated cases the Snake, both being accepted versions. It is because Kunapipi is translated as Fertility Mother, through the greater part of the Northern Territory, that we have preferred to use that appellation.

A number of ceremonies throughout the northern half of the
794 Northern Territory are associated with Fertility Mothers and Rain-
796 bow (or Great) Snakes; and it is possible that the majority of these
cults are linked with one another, even if their outward expressions
184 are dissimilar. This aspect requires intensive study, including the
collection of mythological texts, and analysis of relevant ritual and
songs. The Kunapipi cult, however, consists of certain distinctive
elements, that are found throughout the areas we have mentioned.

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[7] L. Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 294.

CHAPTER III

MYTHOLOGICAL BASIS OF THE KUNAPIPI

● 773 The myth that substantiates Kunapipi ritual in this north-eastern region is thus concerned with the two Wauwalak sisters; and this
796 same myth (as mentioned in Chapter I *c*) serves to explain two other
794 indigenous rituals, the age-grading *djunggawon* ceremony, and the "higher" religious ritual of *ngu:rlmak*. Each of these three cere-
[561] monies, the *djunggawon*, the *kunapipi* and the *ngu:rlmak*, emphasizes some particular feature of this myth. But at the same time, to understand thoroughly the Kunapipi ritual and symbolism it is necessary to be acquainted with the complete Wauwalak myth. Even then, certain aspects must be interpreted, according to Aboriginal explanations, before their meaning can become apparent. Traditional symbolism in ritual, through long years of constant repetition, becomes so stylized that the original intent is sometimes obscured; it is often necessary, therefore, to interpret on the basis not only of mythology, but also of comparison with similar actions and symbols in other regions. However, in this small study we are concerned not so much with theoretical analysis, as with recording the structure and basis of the cult in this particular area, assisted by a glance at its expression in two neighbouring groups.

In north-eastern Arnhem Land, where most of the indigenous
[616] religious doctrine is expressed through the Djanggawul *dua* and the
[184] Laintjung-Banaitja *jiritja* cycles, the Wauwalak series is not the most important. Again, to understand fully the importance of this concept of fertility it is necessary to realize the place of the Djanggawul Brother and Sisters in Yirrkalla sacred life, for they were responsible in the first place for the birth of the Wauwalak. The power of fructification, however, has been transmitted to the Two Wauwalak Sisters (*vide* Chapters I and II) with the introduction of the Kunapipi.

It is relevant to mention, in this context, that women play an
562 important part in all sacred ritual in north-eastern Arnhem Land,
794 where many of the rites are concerned with the reproductive function
796 of womankind, and of female Ancestral (or Spirit) Beings. Women to-day are acquainted, although in many cases somewhat imper-
773 fectly, with the background of sacred ceremony and the underlying doctrines. Indeed, men stress the fact that in the Dreaming Period women initially possessed all sacred ritual, and lost it only through

the men's duplicity. This is particularly apparent in the Djanggawul 562
myth (*vide*, for example, Chapters I and IV). Merely because they do 773
not join in certain of the most sacred mysteries, women do not feel 794
"left out" of things, or pushed aside into what has been termed by
some writers a profane existence, with attendant feelings of inferi- 796
ority. On the contrary, they realize that they have a supplementary
function in maintaining camp dancing, and answering the men's
ritualistic calls from the sacred ground. It is necessary, for instance,
that they prepare food for the men at such times, and observe certain
tabus. A woman must know her own totemic clan songs, inherited [424]
from her father, and to a lesser extent those of her mother, and be
able to sing them on appropriate occasions. She must know the
correct dance movements and steps to accompany the men's singing
in the "outside" ceremonies, as well as in the sacred rituals where
she has her own part to play. There is no jealousy of the men's
performances alone on the sacred ground. The men, so women say,
are performing these ceremonies not only for themselves, but for all
the people in general. This is simply a normal extension of the [462]
sexual division of labour and activity.

* * * *

The story of the Wauwalak is rarely told in prose by a story-teller 533
of this region. Usually it is transmitted from one group of men to
another, through the generations, in ritual, accompanied by explana- 773
tions, on the ceremonial ground. Moreover, the whole myth is
related in the sacred "inside" Wauwalak cycle of some hundreds of
songs, in two main series: the "inside" Bush cycle, and the "inside"
seaside cycle, each describing in detail the adventures of the Sisters.
There are also the "outside" (secular) Bush and seaside cycles, sung
in the main camp to the dancing of women: these continue the story,
and reveal many aspects of the myth. Each one of these songs is
representative of the very best in native poetry,[1] which it is not
possible to set down in the bare general translation presented here.

The Wauwalak myth begins in a region usually unidentified (*vide* 171
Chapter IX), said vaguely to be somewhere south in the "Bush".
This means, perhaps, that the Wauwalak sisters came from the direc- 773
tion of the Roper River, the hypothetical home of the Kunapipi 776
Mother and her two daughters, the Mungamunga. In any case, the
Wauwalak came northwards at an early period, towards the main-
land opposite the Crocodile Islands (that is, near Milingimbi),
bringing with them the rituals of the *djunggawon* and *ngu:rlmak*.
Then the myth itself became to some extent localized in northern
Arnhem Land. It is on the mainland south of Milingimbi that the
most sacred totemic sites connected with the Wauwalak are found;

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[1] This is reserved for a detailed study of the Wauwalak Cycle in relation to the *djunggawon* and *ngu:rlmak* ceremonies.

171 and it was to this region, apparently within historic times, that the
•773 Kunapipi found its way and finally became established. On the
776 eastern side of Arnhem Land we hear little of the local travels and adventures of the Wauwalak: all the *djunggawon* and *ngu:rlmak* ritual of that area is inspired by the myth which centres around this country near Milingimbi. One version only, endeavouring apparently to weld the Wauwalak mythology more closely to the Rose River Kunapipi, relates that the Two Sisters came up from the Roper River through Nungguboiju territory to Rose River, and continued directly up the coast to Kararwu, at Arnhem Bay.

773 The Wauwalak sisters, one older and one younger, left their home territory, the land of the *dua* Wauwalak people. Before leaving, the elder sister had incestuous relations with a clansman, and as a result she became pregnant. She was called *gungman* (that is, a mature child-bearing woman), while the younger girl, or *wirlkul*, was *kalngawona* (that is, having no child). They travelled in the direction of Muruwul (or Mu:ruwol) sacred waterhole, naming all the animals, birds and plants. Both of them carried stone spears, and wore decorative head-bands of feathered string and cane armlets: the younger sister, the *wirlkul*, wore a breast girdle of woven fibre, which fitted under her shoulder blades and her swelling breasts. They walked along, killing iguana, opossum, bandicoot, bush rat and kangaroo for food, and collecting yams. As they gathered these, placing them in their large *bulpul* dilly-bag, they said, "You will be *mareiin* later on". That is, the animals, yams, and so on would become sacred: they would be *rangga* objects, and be commemorated in ceremony.

The women came at last to Gru:awona, and the younger sister said: "We'll have a rest here".

"All right, sister", replied the other. "I feel my baby moving inside, and it will soon come out."

[616] They made a fire and rested there. A little later, this elder sister gave birth to a female child, who belonged to the *jiritja* moiety, although because of the incestuous union its father had been *dua*. They remained at this place, but the afterbirth blood was still flowing when the elder sister was walking about.

When she was well enough to move, they continued their journey towards Muruwul, which was not far from the sea-coast. The afterbirth blood was still running when they reached the sacred tabued well (or waterhole), and a trail of blood drops had been left all along the track. At Muruwul they made fire, and took some food from their dilly-bag for cooking.

First they placed an opossum on the fire to roast; but as soon as the creature began to grow warm, it got up and ran away. Then they tried to cook a bandicoot, but this too rose from the fire and ran away. The iguana and the rat, and all the other animals, did the same.

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Now, in the sacred waters of Muruwul waterhole lived the great *dua* Julunggul Rock Python, called *jindi'ba:pi* (big snake), who was the "headman" of all the animals, birds and vegetables: this is the Rainbow Snake, common to the greater part of Aboriginal Australia. The sex of this particular snake is not always defined; but Julunggul is usually (not always) said to be a female, with alternate names like *witi:tj, goingaru, bandei'jindi'mirawa,*[2] *gundaru*, and so on. Other snakes of both sexes were also living at Muruwul. (The fact that a female snake eventually swallowed the Two Sisters does not affect its role as a Penis symbol.) The animals which the Wauwalak tried to cook knew that Julunggul was nearby, and that the women were "desecrating" her waterhole by dropping afterbirth blood around it and eating food in the vicinity: the animal food, by coming close to the sacred well, had assumed sacredness also (that is, become *mareiin*), and was tabu to these women. They understood too that there was "big business" (that is, sacred ritual paraphernalia) in the well, and that the women should not have camped near it but gone further away. Leaving the fire, therefore, they ran to the well and jumped in, becoming future *mareiin* ceremonial figures, and sacred *rangga* objects for ritual use. By leaving the women in this way, they tried to indicate that the well was tabu, and that it was against the religious code to cook or sit near it. But the women did not realize the mistake they were making.

Two small edible snakes, called *gundaru* like the Julunggul, but really *gulpanwa* (yellow snake), also ran away and jumped into the well.

"What's wrong, sister?" the Wauwalak asked each other.

Then they tried to roast the yams; but instead of running away as the other food had done, these fell into ashes as soon as they were placed in the fire. "They just made themselves ashes": that is to say, their spirits had left the fire, and gone to the sacred well.

"What's wrong?" they asked again. "Something happen here? All the animals and yams have disappeared. We can't understand it. What will we do? We sleep here?"

"Ah, yes", said the elder sister. "We'll sleep here."

"What's that?" The *wirlkul*, thinking she had heard a noise, looked in the direction of Muruwul well.

"That is a very deep well", said her sister. "We'll sleep nearby."

But the *wirlkul* had really heard the movements of Julunggul, emerging from the depths of her subterranean home. All the totemic animals, reptiles and vegetables, jumping into the well, had disturbed her; and she could smell the afterbirth blood of the elder sister. She lifted her head from the water, with nostrils quivering, smelling the odour of pollution.[3] Then, holding her head higher,

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[2] A term used by the Mo:ru and Ba'ralba'ral linguistic groups of the Wessel Islands.

773 she sprayed water outwards and upwards to form many rain clouds.

The two sisters, who were sitting down, saw these clouds forming into one, threatening rain. But they did not suspect that Julunggul had sent them.

"You had better get some stringy-bark, so that we can make a hut", said the *gungman* to her sister. "It's going to rain."

"All right, sister"; and the younger went out to cut sheets of bark. The older sister was still not strong enough to do any heavy work.

After the *wirlkul* had made several journeys, bringing back sheets of bark, the two constructed a simple hut; they lit a fire in the doorway, and went inside to rest. By this time it was sunset, and the rain began to fall, washing the coagulated blood from the ground into the sacred well. The Julunggul stirred in discomfort, seeing the streaks of blood on the surface of the water.

When it was dark, Julunggul emerged again from her well; holding high her head she spat out lightning, one vivid flash after another, until the Wauwalak crouched together in fear, calling out at each flash. (This lightning is said to have been different to that normally seen; but the women didn't know it was caused by the Snake. "They thought it was from cloud.")

After the lightning, the Julunggul slowly and deliberately came out of the well, dragging her sinuous body. But at first, pleased that the lightning had finished, the Wauwalak did not see her.

Gradually the Snake drew nearer to the cleared place around the bark hut, her eyes protruding like great lights searching out the women. Then suddenly the Wauwalak saw the Julunggul, and began to cry out.

"What are we going to do?"

"We'd better dance to keep her away."

So the *wirlkul* began to dance, to hinder the Snake's progress. She moved gracefully, shuffling her feet, swaying her body from side to side, and holding in her hands feathered string from which she made cats-cradles as she danced. This particular dancing is called *keiweijun*, for as the girl danced she called out *kei'wa! kei'wa!* (Go away! Go away!)[4] The Julunggul stopped in her course, and watched the dancing. But the girl grew tired, and called out: "Come on, sister, your turn now: I want to rest".

The older sister came from the hut, leaving her child in its cradle of soft paperbark, and began to dance. But her blood, still intermittently flowing, attracted the Snake further; and she moved towards them.

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[847]
[778]

[3] In contradiction to this, menstruation and afterbirth blood is usually described as *maraiin*, or sacred, and so could not "pollute" the well. There is the suggestion that the snake found the blood attractive. This concept will be discussed later in a detailed study of the Wauwalak.

[4] *Vide* R. Berndt, *Sexual Behaviour in Western Arnhem Land*, Chapter IV, Sections IV, V and VIII.

"Come on, sister", cried the *gungman*. "It's no good for me; my 773 blood is coming out, and the Snake is smelling it and coming closer. It's better for you to go on dancing."

So the younger sister continued, and again Julunggul stopped and watched; but as the snake looked, her eyes were still focused on the entrance to the hut, and from time to time she breathed out flashes of lightning. In this way, the Wauwalak took it in turns to dance; when the younger sister danced, the Snake stopped; but when the older one continued, she came forward again. So the younger girl danced longer than the other, and as she swayed from side to side the intensive activity caused her menstruation to begin; then the Python, smelling more blood, came forward without hesitation.

Frightened, the Wauwalak ran into their hut, and with the baby, sat waiting inside. Slowly Julunggul drew nearer, twisting her body all round the outside of the hut, and put her head into the aperture. Seeing the women and the child, she sprayed them with saliva (called *ngeiakngeiakma*) from her throat, to make them very slippery; this covered their bodies, so that their skin became soft and easy for swallowing. Then Julunggul opened her mouth and swallowed first the baby, then the mother. As the elder sister was being swallowed, even when only her head and breasts were protruding from the Snake's mouth, she called out *kei'wa ! kei'wa !* But the Snake took no notice; she turned to the *wirlkul* and swallowed her too.

Then Julunggul slowly returned to Muruwul well; she entered it, and stood erect, with head upright and high out of the water. Beside this female Julunggul was her husband, also Julunggul, who had stayed in the well. They both belong to the Li:alauwermiri linguistic group.

These Snakes are so high that they can see all over the country—right down towards the Crocodile Islands and Cape Stewart; away into the interior of Arnhem Land, out to Elcho Island, the English Company Islands and the Wessels, to Arnhem Bay and Cape Arnhem, and down towards Port Bradshaw, Trial Bay, Caledon and Blue Mud Bays, even as far as Rose River. Out on the Wessel Islands at Guluma, they could see two other Rock Pythons, *wirikri* and *kaiambul*, standing up erect.

"What is your language ?" these two asked the Snake who had swallowed the Wauwalak.

"We are Li:alauwermiri. What is yours ?"

"We are Ba'rangu."

Other *dua* Pythons also erected themselves, and the Li:alauwer- 773 miri Snakes asked them in turn what their languages were. There 616 were Ri:radjingu, Kalpu, Marakulu, Djarlwak, Wurungguku, 797 Marangu, Kopateiindamiri, Lultma'rangu, Dapingu, Ngeimil, Gwolamala, Djapu, Grutawatumiri, Djambarpingu, Dadawi and others.

773 All of these were linguistic groups distributed among certain clans.
616 "Ah, what a lot of languages we talk," said the Li:alauwermiri.
197 "But although our languages are slightly different, we all share the same *mareiin* (*rangga* totemic emblems), and have the same ceremonies."

All the Pythons from the various *dua* groups called out ritually:
773 *'a: ! ko:kjei ! 'a: ! ko:kjei !* And the sound of their voices was like thunder.

Then the Wessel Islands Python asked the Li:alauwermiri Julunggul, "What have you had to eat?"

"I couldn't say", replied Julunggul.

"But you must tell me what you have had," insisted the other. The Li:alauwermiri was *gu'rungkngu* (that is, unwilling to answer correctly), and kept refusing to tell the other Snake. But at last the first Snake said: "I had a rock wallaby and a parrot fish."

"All right, I'll tell you what I had", the female Julunggul replied. "I had two nice little girls and a baby; they are in my body."

The others would not believe. They repeated, "We had a rock wallaby and a parrot fish."

"That is nothing", the Julunggul boasted, "we had those Wauwalak."

Then the Julunggul made a tremendous noise, called *muljulngo* or *du:ldo:n*, now part of the sound of the bullroarer. The two terms are now archaic.

* * * *

It is necessary to pause at this juncture, and comment on some of
773 the aspects dealt with in this part of the myth.

114 In the first place, there are many versions of the Wauwalak myth,
but the most reliable of these are contained in the elaborate song
831 cycles. The above version, which is outlined only briefly and has a number of appendices, differs in several minor points from that set out by Dr. Warner,[5] obtained in the vicinity of Milingimbi. For example, the Wauwalak Sisters in his version had already a child when they reached the outskirts of Muruwul (there termed Mirrirmina), and the younger sister gave birth to a baby on the way; both children were male. It was said that menstrual blood polluted the sacred well; while the Rock Python itself was male, called the Big Father. The flood theme, after the swallowing of the Wauwalak and the conversation of the various *dua* Snakes, makes its appearance in other versions which are not appended here.

The fact that the Rock Python, in the version we outline, is female (called by informants *jindi'ba:pi*, big/snake, and not *jindi'ba:pa*, big father: *ba:pi* and *ba:pa* may perhaps have been confused in Warner's version) is an important point, for it stresses the aspect of

[5] L. Warner, *op. cit.* pp. 250-259. Since working at Yirrkalla in 1946-47, the writer has carried out additional research at Milingimbi (1950) into the Wauwalak mythology and songs. Certain local variations are found there, which it is proposed to discuss later in some detail.

fertility: the female Julunggul is big (as if she were pregnant) from 773 having swallowed the Wauwalak. Aborigines say: "There are two Snakes, both Julunggul. One of these smelt the afterbirth blood and 114 swallowed the Wauwalak: this was the female. The other was her 831 husband, who stopped back in the well". According to another version, both take part in the swallowing.

Nevertheless the female Julunggul, entering the hut in which the Sisters were crouching, symbolizes a penis, and her entry into the hut "is like a penis going into a vagina". The whole process of swallowing is interpreted by natives as an act of coitus. "It is coitus which causes female fecundity, expressed indirectly through the presence of the Wauwalak, as a transmutation of the great Fertility Mother, Djanggawul (mother of the Wauwalak)." The swallowing, accompanied by lightning and rain, serves to bring about the wet season (monsoonal period), the period of growth, and the renewal of animal, bird and vegetable life.

Another important point is the spraying of the Wauwalak by the Julunggul, before swallowing, with a "slippery" salival substance. This saliva is called *ngal*, which is also used for semen (also *ju:tu*, a term used generally for a child): the Julunggul sprays out the *ngal*, like an ejaculation of semen (with her head in the women's hut; that is, "penis in vagina"), and then swallows them (that is, coitus). Now, in the *djunggawon* and *kunapipi* rituals, actors are painted with white paint called *ngal* (*buru* or *buluk*), signifying the Julunggul's saliva or semen (*vide* Appendix I).

The erectness of the Julunggul and the other *dua* Pythons is the result of the swallowing (interpreted by informants as an erect penis). It is said that Julunggul and the other Snakes retained their upright positions only "because they had swallowed the Wauwalak and the other meat".

The noise made by Julunggul, after telling the *dua* Snakes she had 773 swallowed the Wauwalak, was (as mentioned) part of the sound of the ritual bullroarer (termed also *julunggul* or *julunggir*, and *mumuna*; 114 this latter is the "outside" secular word used for both the bullroarer and the Snake, called "Lightning Snake". It is also one name of the Kunapipi or Kadjari Mother; this aspect will be mentioned again in Chapters IX to XI). The rest of its sound was obtained from the noise made by Julunggul, when she first sent out lightning which split a tree; the wood from which the bullroarer is made symbolizes a piece of wood that sprang out when the lightning hit the tree. The bullroarer is used principally in the Kunapipi ritual, although also at [534] times in the *ngu:rlmak*; its sound is said to be a "very happy one", for Julunggul has just swallowed the Wauwalak. On the other hand, in the *djunggawon* ritual when the *julunggul* "wooden trumpet" is blown, the "light" sound of *brar! brar!* signifies the Python's swallowing.

773 114 Some confusion exists as to how the afterbirth blood fell into the sacred well of Muruwul. It is said by some that the older Sister went down to the well to obtain water for drinking, and the blood dropped in while she was bending over. Others declare that the rain washed the blood into the well. The Julunggul, however, first smelt the proximity of the Two Sisters, and then the blood of the older. They had, according to the most reliable version, been camped at a swamp surrounded with "cabbage" or "wild coconut" palms, not far from Muruwul. It was here that much blood fell; when the rain began, the blood was carried down to the sacred well. A number of songs deal with this aspect.

[534] Julunggul, so aborigines say, resembles an immense coloured caterpillar, *dupal*, with similar features and body, but without its numerous legs; the bullroarer is like this, particularly when it has been decorated with feather down fastened on with blood, and attached to a long cord of human hair twine.

* * * *

Since there are deviations in other Wauwalak versions, it is advisable to append the following two stories on the same subject; but the main theme is the same, and only the differences will be described in detail.

773 The two Wauwalak painted each other with boomerang designs[6] before the birth of the elder sister's child.[7] When it was born, with the help of other unnamed women, the two started off for Muruwul. On arrival there the older sister partially built a bark hut called *murlk* (a sacred name, for this is the term for the hut placed on the ceremonial ground in the *djunggawon*, *kunapipi* and *ngu:rlmak* rituals). Her afterbirth blood was still intermittently flowing. The younger sister had, in the meantime, hidden herself in the surrounding grass. When the *murlk* was finished she came out, and began to dance along the track leading to the hut and to the well: she skipped along, shaking branches as she danced, just as the women dance to-day in the secular *djunggawon* and *kunapipi*. Coming near the mouth of the hut, she shook the branches, threw them aside, and entered; she sat down in there with her sister, and her sister's daughter. At the same time, she felt her menstruation blood running inside her from her breasts to her navel, down into the uterus, and flowing out. This had been caused by her energetic dancing, the movement of her hips, buttocks and legs. She had danced, too, the dance of the "spring water", the running streams of rain-water during the wet season,

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[778] [839] [6] This design refers to the special boomerang used for ritual defloration (sometimes associated with ceremonial intercourse) on the Kunapipi ground; the Rose River Love Song Cycle treats this subject. *Vide*, also, Chapters IV and V.

[7] *Vide* R. and C. Berndt, Sacred Figures of Ancestral Beings of Arnhem Land, *Oceania*, Vol. XVIII, No. 4, pp. 314-317.

and this symbolized menstruation blood. The latter is translated 773
colloquially in this region as "spring blood", a menstruating woman
being known, in translation, as a "spring woman". [841]

There the two women sat, the younger menstruating, and the older
with an intermittent flow of afterbirth blood.[8] It was at this time that [844]
Julunggul smelt the blood, emerged from the well to swallow the Sisters, and made rain.

When the Wauwalak saw the rain clouds gathering, the elder sister said: "Well, young sister, you had better run down and get some paperbark so that we can finish this *murlk*".

"No, sister", replied the other. "I have the same as you (that is, blood flowing); it is a very happy time, for this is my first menstruation. It's not like you, sister, you know about it because you have had it before, but this is my first time. I'm not going to go from this hut. I'm going to look after your daughter, while you yourself go out for bark. You know, if I go it might run all over the place. I can dig a hole in the middle of the *murlk* and let my blood flow into it, then no one can see it."

"All right", agreed the older sister. She went out and collected more stringy-bark, and at the same time obtained yams and animals for food, as in the above version. She was able to collect these easily, for she had a good hunting dog called *Djirawa* (the name meaning, "a black cloud during dry weather time"). She returned to the camp with the food and bark.

They made fire and began to cook this food, but it all "flew" away in turn to the sacred well. The younger sister asked the other, "You know why all these animals have run away?"

"I don't know", was the answer. "There might be something in this place (that is, something sacred). Something might come along to our camp." It was at about this time that the Snake, who had been watching them, sent out lightning. . . .

The sequence of events int his version has been changed, but the final section conforms to the first story.

The next version is illustrated by a detailed drawing (see Plate VI 773
and "key" text figure 1) depicted in red, yellow, blue, green and 532
black crayon on brown paper,[9] a substitute for stringy bark, the normal medium, by two Ri:raidjingu men named Mauwulan and Wondjuk (father and son), the former being the headman for the Wauwalak cycle.

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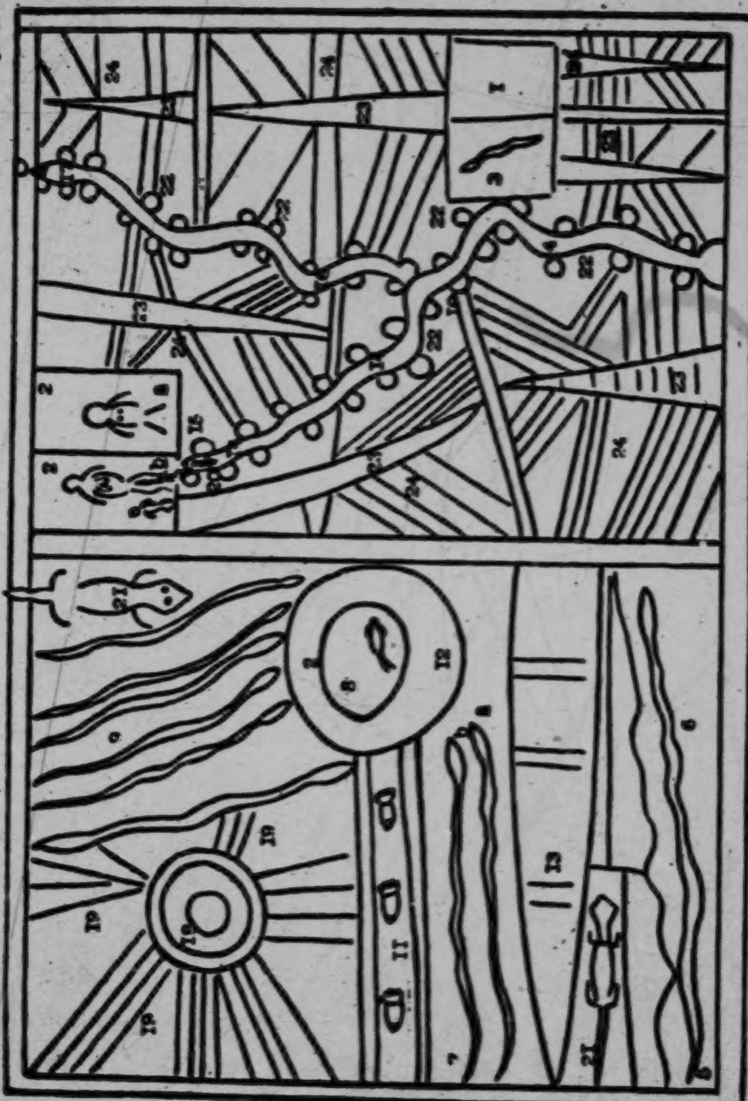
[8] Said by aborigines to continue for about two days after child-birth.

[9] Reference: No. 105, Feb. 4th, 1947, Book 18, Series A, R. Berndt.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TEXT FIGURE I.

Sketch-Key to Plate IV depicting part of the Wawalak Myth.

1 is the billabong or sacred well, Muruwul, also called Mernaninja, 532 Mainbunu:ru and Tamalanungomi. In its waters is the Julunggul 773 watching the Wauwalak (2); *a* the young sister, *b* the elder sister and child. 3 is another Lightning Snake (python), who smells the blood at 1 (Muruwul) and goes back to 4; then it comes round to 5.

6 is the female Julunggul, while 7 shows the male (*a*) and female (*b*) Snakes who are "after" the Wauwalak. (Here, an important variation occurs: two Julunggul, a male and a female, are said to be [184] "after" the Wauwalak, whereas in the first version the male Python is said to play only a subsidiary part, and the female is the one who takes the initiative.)

The Two Sisters (2) hear the noise made by the Snakes. They leave the elder sister's child in their camp, *murlk* (8), and begin to dance, circling around, trying to stop the Julunggul's' progress; 12 represents their dancing.

The drawing then returns to an earlier scene. All the food they have caught has "made itself bird", and flown away to the sacred well (1). The younger sister asks the older, "Look, what are we going to have now? All our food has flown away". They look back towards 9, and see all the young snakes coming in their direction (the Sisters are now at 8): they had thought this camp was free from snakes, but now they are everywhere.

Then they see the two big Julunggul (7 *a* and *b*) circling around, and it begins to rain, for the female snake has made rain at Muruwul (1). And while the older sister goes out for stringy bark to make their *murlk* weatherproof, the Julunggul sneaks through the rain; the younger sister has remained to look after the child.

Now while the other sister is out gathering bark, at 10, she goes over to the billabong for drinking water; as she drinks, her afterbirth blood falls into the water and is carried down to where the Julunggul live. It is from this that the Snakes smell the blood, and emerge. (The sequence of events is slightly confused, and should apparently conform to the first version.) The sister returns along a road (11) which shows her footprints. The two complete the hut (8) and enter it; now it is growing dark, and they sleep.

While the Sisters and child sleep, the Julunggul sends a "signal": that is, lightning from Muruwul. The younger sister feels this: she awakens and looks through the doorway. She sees the vivid flashes of lightning and is frightened; returning to her sister, she says: "You wake up, sister, there's something coming along, they can smell us".

Then they both dance around, 12, as women do now in the main camp, in order to keep away the Julunggul. When they can dance no longer, they return to their hut. In the meantime the two Julunggul (7) have been sneaking towards the women; the other snakes (9) "only take *mala* for the big Julunggul" (that is, they belong to the

532 Julunggul clan of snakes, but do not take part in the actual swallowing).

773 At last the Julunggul reach the *murlk*: the female snake puts her head into the aperture and swallows the elder sister and child (2 *a*), and then the male snake puts in his head and swallows the young sister (2 *b*).

When they have completed the swallowing, both stand erect with their heads away up in the sky; they try to "straighten" themselves up, resting on their bellies. All the younger snakes (9) are "very surprised because of the swallowing". It is probably these younger snakes with whom they hold the conversation mentioned in the first version.

They try to erect themselves still further into the sky ("like big rainbows"), but fall down because they have been eating the Wauwalak and the child. They fall over to 13, which shows the mark from their fall, in the shape of the sacred dancing ground. They try to stand up again, but "they are too happy, and talk" and fall over.

Then the Julunggul return along a track, 4, to Muruwul (1), where they live for a time. Later, they "walk" down this track, which is edged with stones:[10] they clear the track, casting the rocks (22) aside; they reach 15. There they vomit the Wauwalak (2). First the male snake vomits the young sister, then the female snake the older sister and her daughter. After this the Julunggul return along the track, 14, to 16, and rest at 17 (the head of the Julunggul).

At 18 is a *gundir* anthill, containing *nga:ti*[11] (white ant) termites (19: the drawing representing streams of ants), which come around to 15, and bite the Wauwalak and child. As soon as these are bitten, they awaken and become alive again.

The Julunggul look over to 15 from 17, and see that the Wauwalak are moving about. They return down 16 to 14 and reach 15, where again they swallow the Sisters and child, but do not vomit them a second time.[12]

The Julunggul go back to Muruwul (1) and continue living in its waters; they are still there to-day. Muruwul is surrounded by *gulwiri* "cabbage" palms: some stand at the water's edge, and some have their roots deep down in the waterhole itself so that only the top trunk and branches appear (23). 24 shows "spring water" running in all directions, from the rains caused by the Julunggul. The track marks of the Snakes (leading to 15), and the place at which they fell (13), are still to be seen. 20 shows the elder Wauwalak's afterbirth blood being washed down the Snakes' track (14) after the rain towards the billabong (1). 21 depicts a *gungalung* (big-headed gecko lizard), playing around the Muruwul billabong after the rain; for these lizards always come out at the beginning of the rainy season, "and follow up the Julunggul". 532 773

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[10] Like the specially designed tracks of Julunggul, used in the *djunggawon*, *kunapipi* and *ngu:rlmak* rituals.

[11] In some versions these are described as "meat" ants.

[136] [12] Pythons still do this to-day: they eat something, swallow it, spew it up, lick it, and eat it again; this time they retain it.

This is a remarkable drawing of one aspect of sacred mythology in this region; it belongs to a large series dealing with all aspects of religious doctrine in north-eastern Arnhem Land.

This version tells us something of what happened to the Wauwalak after their swallowing. The first version also deals briefly with this aspect, as follows:

After the swallowing, the female Julunggul returned to Muruwul: there she vomited the Wauwalak and child, who were revivified by the bites of the ants, but were eventually re-swallowed. The Wauwalak spirits are still at the sacred well: "we can't see them, although they can see us, for now they belong to Julunggul". When they see human beings coming to this site, the Julunggul swallows them again in their spirit form, "for they are unable to walk about like ordinary people". [776]

The Wauwalak-Julunggul mythology serves to substantiate the Kunapipi rituals: a co-ordinating thread links the various events set out in the story, and these are symbolically expressed in the ceremonies. This myth is distributed among the three rituals already mentioned, the *djunggawon*, *kunapipi* and *ngu:rlmak*; the *ma:ndiwala* (the *marndiella* ceremony of Warner, *op. cit.* pp. 329–334), localized around the Roper and Rose Rivers, has not yet reached north-east Arnhem Land. Each of them expresses a particular feature of the myth. 773 796 [171]

The Kunapipi, adapted as it is to local traditional needs, has lost none of its symbolism and intent. In conventional Kunapipi mythology one of the principal themes is the Fertility Mother's pregnancy, and her giving birth to "Dreaming" folk: these people she kept in her womb, and "let them out" from time to time to perform sacred ritual. Finally, there is her death, and the totemites' enactment of the returning to and leaving the Mother's womb. The continual birth and rebirth of the totemites symbolize the sequence of the seasons, for Kunapipi had the power to send out the spirits of all the natural species. She was accompanied by the Rainbow Snake, her male counterpart. 773 776 796 [805]

At Yirrkalla, the Fertility Mothers are the Wauwalak: the peculiarly female characteristics of menstruation and afterbirth blood accentuate the concept of procreation. The presence of the Pythons (the male and female Snakes), their ejaculation of saliva (semen), their entry into the *murlk*, and the swallowing, complete the theme. The actual swallowing, said to mean coitus, may also symbolize the "return of the Wauwalak to the uterus of their Mother", as in con- 773 776 831

6: Berndt E-5 (1946-1947) 1951
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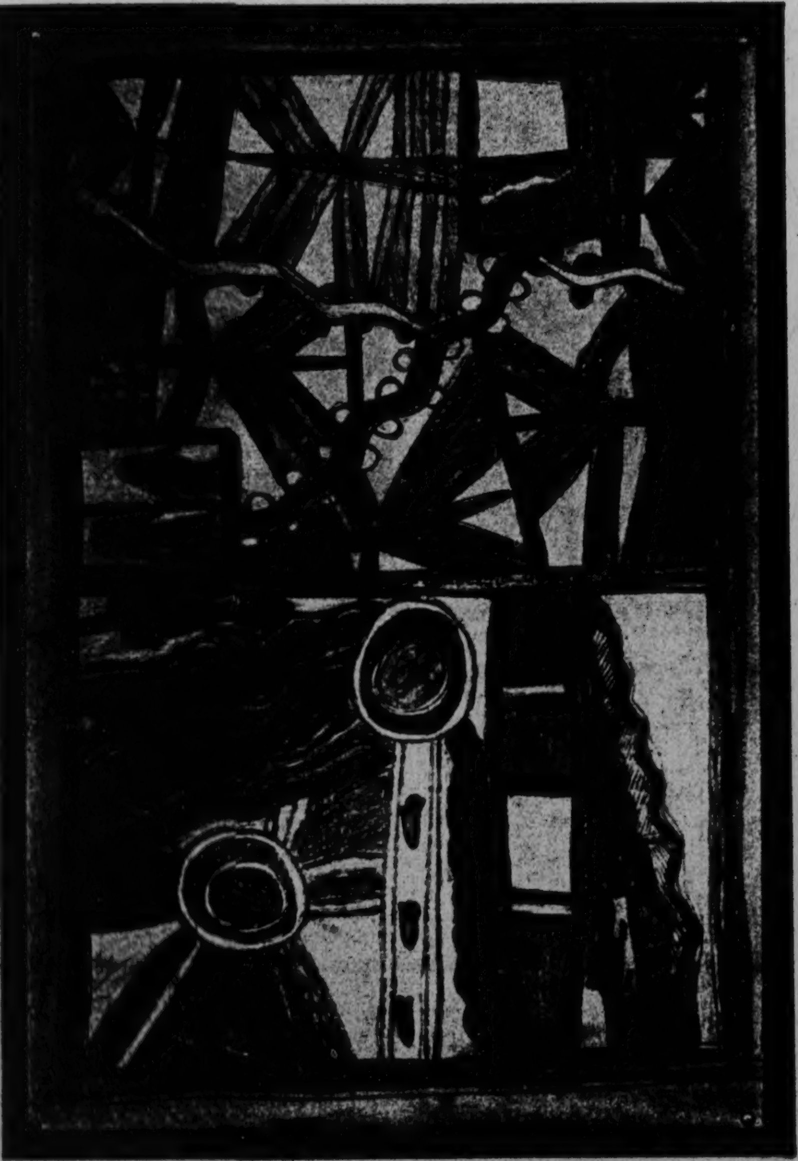

PLATE IV

[Facing p. 32]

773 ventional interpretation of Kunapipi mythology. The vomiting of the Wauwalak, with their revivification and re-swallowing, and their
776 subsequent swallowing in spirit form, extends the symbolism, and may be compared with the coming and going (birth and rebirth) of
831 the totemites to and from the Mother's uterus.

This interpretation, based on details expressed by aborigines themselves, concerns only the Kunapipi rituals, for other purely indigenous ritual must be interpreted in the light of the Djanggawul mythology, and various extensions of the Wauwalak cycle. However, the basis of Yirrkalla religion rests on the premise of a Fertility Mother, who is an "Eternal" symbol of nature in her abundance. She is accompanied by a Great Snake as a symbol of insemination.

The association of the Snake with a Fertility Mother is fundamental in this doctrine. In recognizing this fact, we must realize that
[842] the aborigine of northern Arnhem Land understands the importance of coitus in bringing about conception and birth. And this principle is basic in their thinking.[13]

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[13] *Vide* L. Warner's interpretation, *op. cit.* pp. 371 *et seq.*

CHAPTER IV

ITS EXPRESSION THROUGH RITUAL

In the last chapter we saw that the Kunapipi ritual was substantiated 773 by the Wauwalak-Julunggul mythology, possessing certain outstanding features. The Wauwalak had indulged in irregular sexual 796 intercourse before leaving their home territory, and in consequence a child was born to the elder sister. On their journey, they named all the totemic animals, reptiles, birds and vegetables that were to become sacred *marelin* objects, prominent in future ceremonies which would concern the increase of their species, and would include three main rituals, the *djunggawon*, *kunapipi* and *ngu:rlmak*. The odour from the afterbirth blood and the younger sister's menstruation aroused the great Rainbow or Lightning Snakes (pythons), who caused lightning and rain, representing the onset of the wet monsoonal season. Attempting to stop the progress of the Snakes, the Wauwalak danced and sang songs associated with the above rituals; in this way they furnished songs for the rituals which later would commemorate them. The climax of the myth is the swallowing, the culmination of events that bring about fertility, the action that brings into force the mechanism for the increase of human beings and natural species, and the continuation of the seasons. Subsequent events, such as the talking of the Snakes, the vomiting and re-swallowing of the Wauwalak, merely accentuate the actual climax, and stress the process of birth and rebirth. All these features are expressed, by symbolism, in ritual.

The myth itself is not an idle chronicle of events that occurred in the past, and are to-day without real and vivid meaning. The Wauwalak, although they lived in the *wonga:r* (Dreaming) Period, when Ancestral Beings walked the earth creating and naming various physiographical features and natural phenomena, are just as much alive spiritually to-day as ever they were. With the Julunggul, they possess qualities and power without which, it is said, man cannot exist. He is in need of "divine" intervention, that will ensure his material and spiritual continuation. This power which releases the forces beyond man's control, but essential to his well-being, is possessed by the great Ancestral Beings who are spiritually "eternal".

The crux of the matter is, how may this "power" be released ? To know the sacred mythology and its intent is not sufficient; religion,

773 to these aborigines, is not just passive reliance on the Ancestral
796 Beings, an inertia based on the hope that "something is bound to turn up" if they wait long enough. They must do their part to ensure the action of the Ancestral Beings; and their part is the ritual re-enactment of the relevant myth. This releases the "power" (or *dal*) inherent in the Ancestral Beings. This *dal* then finds full expression, and fertility is assured.

Thus the myth is thought to express the intentions of the Ancestral Beings, who possess the power to carry them out; and this power is
[805] released (or brought to bear) by sacred ritual. It arranges the seasons,
[789] maintains an adequate supply of food, and ensures the continuance of the group as a whole.

Before we proceed with the Kunapipi ritual, it is necessary to relate the final part of the Wauwalak myth, explaining the way in which this ritual was obtained and handed down from *wonga:r* times.

The three rituals, of which only one is to be treated here, are grouped together in terms of kinship ties. The *djunggawon*, an age-
[561] grading ceremony, is called *katu*, son, and so is its principal ritual
[534] object, the long *julunggul* wooden "trumpet". The *ngu:rlmak*, mainly religious in character and open only to adult postulants, is termed *ba:pa*, father, and so is its ceremonial hollow log *uwar* "drum". The *kunapipi* is *mari* (mother's mother's brother), like its
[601] main ritual emblem, the *jelmalandji*. Although the relationship term of *mari* signifying the *kunapipi* is one that normally denotes age (that is, in the grandparents' generation), it is less important from the point of view of sacredness than the *ngu:rlmak*, said to be the major ritual of the trilogy. Sometimes, however, the *ngu:rlmak* is spoken of as "the father of the *kunapipi* side", while the *kunapipi* and *djunggawon* are classified together. But in practice it seems that, irrespective of the terminology of *mari*, the Kunapipi is really of secondary importance.

796 All the Wauwalak-Julunggul ceremonies belong to the *dua* clans or linguistic groups, and are under the direction of *dua* moiety
616 totemic headmen; but members of the *jiritja* moiety assist in the dancing, singing, and making of ritual objects, and may even include certain of their own particular dances based on purely *jiritja* myth cycles. *Dua* ceremonial leaders, however, are recognized as the principal custodians of indigenous ritual, for they possess not only the Wauwalak but also the Djanggawul. In contrast to the more conservative *dua* groups, the *jiritja* have incorporated introduced themes[1] into their ritual life.

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[113] [1] *Vide* R. and C. Berndt, Secular Figures of North-East Arnhem Land, *American Anthropologist*, 1949, Vol. 51, No. 2, pp. 213-222, with plates; Discovery of Pottery in North-Eastern Arnhem Land. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, Vol. LXXVII, Part 2; and R. Berndt, Badu, Islands of the Spirits, *Oceania*, Vol. XIX, No. 2, pp. 93-103; R. and C. Berndt, *Arnhem Land, Its History and Its People*, for publication.

The Kunapipi should be primarily *dua*, but a split of some kind 796
seems to have taken place, so that now the *jiritja* moiety groups have
a separate song cycle; this may perhaps be explained by the fact that, 616
in the eyes of the north-east Arnhem Landers, the Kunapipi is of alien
origin. The division of ritual activities between both *dua* and *jiritja*
people is of importance in ascertaining the relationship of indi-
vidual aborigines to the Wauwalak ceremonies. This aspect is most
apparent in the manufacture of the *jelmalandji* "posts"; but we can
touch upon it only briefly here. We are concerned not so much with
the individual's attitude towards his ritual and mythology, or with
the relationship of the various neophytes to one another on the
sacred ground, as with the fundamental doctrine of this particular [771]
Aboriginal religion and its expression in ritual. Therefore the indi-
vidual must play only a subsidiary part in this specific study.

After the swallowing of the Wauwalak, the Two Sisters "changed" 773
their names to Ka'lerika'lering (or Girilinggiriling, that is, "having
been swallowed") so that they "could belong to the Kunapipi side". 796
That is, in theory, during the performance of the Kunapipi, the Sisters
are no longer called by the term Wauwalak, although this is still
employed in the *ngu:rlmak* and *djunggawon*. We shall, however, when
referring to the Kunapipi, continue to call them Wauwalak.

Shortly before this, an unmarried male python, called *Lu'ningu*
(that is, from *lu'ni*, a young unmarried man: *lu'ningu*, "place of
young unmarried men"), had come out of the sacred Muruwul well,
and watched the Julunggul swallowing the Wauwalak. When they
were vomited out, Lu'ningu went all round the Muruwul country,
swallowing all the young unmarried boys (termed *lu'nilu'ni*). But
whereas the Wauwalak were vomited and became alive, the young
boys were vomited dead, and did not revive. They had died while
inside the Snake, and when they were vomited there was no flesh on
their bodies; only bones emerged.

As a protest against this outrage by Lu'ningu, the remaining
men held a large meeting and decided to kill the Snake," for he was
no good, this Lu'ningu: he had swallowed all the young men and
they had died". They compared the Lu'ningu with the Julunggul,
saying: "Lu'ningu is no good, he vomits up his people dead. But
Julunggul is all right; he vomited up the Wauwalak so that they
were alive". So they hunted out Lu'ningu, spearing him until he
died.

"What are we going to do?" they asked one another then. So they 773
made a large *jelmalandji* which stood upright in the ground, in
memory of this Snake. That is, "they took a picture of Lu'ningu" 778
saying, "we have to make this Snake, because we killed him". Some 796
confusion exists here, in identifying the *jelmalandji* with the Lu'ningu;
in the big Kunapipi rituals this object is said to represent the
Julunggul who swallowed the Wauwalak.

773 When these people had completed the *jelmalandji* emblem, they
held another meeting "to think about the Wauwalak". "What are
796 we going to do about the blood of those two women ?" they asked
[778] one another.

The most important ceremonial headman, named Nga:ti (that is, termite, sometimes called "meat" ant, who was responsible for revivifying the Wauwalak), stood up; grasping the blade of his stone-spear, he cut his arm and let the blood flow out. "We make ourselves like those two women", he said.

Then other men got up; while some cut a vein inside the elbow,
[785] others cut the inner part of their forearm above the wrist, and all tied
ligatures about their upper arms. This is a substitute for re-opening
the penis incisure to obtain a flow of blood similar to that of the
Mother Kunapipi: it should be remembered that a great deal of the
original Kunapipi ritual concerns subincising groups.

As they let the blood flow they said, "Ah, very good: that is the blood of the 'Spring' Women (that is, afterbirth blood and the menstruation)".

"And what shall we do for the Snake's 'shout' (that is, the sound
773 made by the Julunggul) ?" they asked.

778 They built another *jelmalandji*, larger than the first, to represent
the Julunggul who swallowed the Wauwalak. They smeared arm
796 blood all over its surface, and on to it fastened wild cotton (or white
feather down) to form a pattern symbolizing the Snake. "But it
makes no sound", they said. "It is not like the Julunggul of the
djunggawon, that when blown makes the sound of the Snake; nor is
it like the great *uwar* which 'cries out' when beaten. What shall we
do ?"

So they took a clean piece of wood, from the tree which the
[534] Julunggul had split by lightning (see previous chapter), and marked
it with the Snake design. They obtained human hair cord, and
threaded it through the hole they had bored at one end of the wooden
slab. When they swung this object (the bullroarer), they could hear
the sound of the Julunggul: "this is the different shout, for the
Kunapipi side".

In this case, too, contrary information exists: and this bullroarer
773 for use in the Kunapipi is sometimes said to be the voice of Lu'ningu.
778 Its sound then is a "little bit low", spasmodic and quick, for this
Snake was full from having eaten so many young men, and he was
796 tired. In the *ngu:rlmak* side, the sound of the bullroarer is longer and
184 heavier, for the Julunggul had eaten only the Wauwalak and the
child. In the eastern *ngu:rlmak* rituals, however, the bullroarer is not
used, being reserved solely for the Kunapipi. Such confusion in the
identification of fundamental ritual objects is not unusual in Aboriginal
religion; and for our purpose here it is preferable perhaps to
conform to the original version, in which the bullroarer is said to be

the voice of Julunggul.[2] At the same time, however, the Lu'ningu 796
Snake plays an important part in purely male sacred life. 84

The whole problem of interpretation depends on the distribution 773
of the Wauwalak ritual among the *djunggawon*, *kunapipi* and [778]
ngu:rlmak. For example, the first is a re-enactment of the swallowing of the Two Sisters by Julunggul, and the performance of totemic ceremonies relevant to the animals caught by the women for food. The second concerns the swallowing of the young men, the presence of Julunggul after the swallowing of the Wauwalak, and a number of dances relating to copulation and procreation, stressing the theme of fertility. The third and final ceremonial sequence deals principally with the *murlk* shade, and with other Snakes including the Julunggul. All these rituals to some extent overlap, and the whole myth may be enacted to create a framework for specific aspects.

In the *djunggawon* the Python is called Julunggul and swallows the Wauwalak. In the Kunapipi it is usually known as Moiit, and in addition to swallowing the young men, and disgorging and re-swallowing the Wauwalak, is said to have swallowed the Nga:ti; but this is not substantiated by relevant mythology, and appears to be a Rose River addition. In the *ngu:rlmak*, the same Snake is known as *uwar*. As Julunggul is the commonest sacred term for the Python, it has been retained throughout this work, although some alternatives have been used.

In the Kunapipi, male neophytes leaving the main camp for the sacred ground are said to be swallowed by Lu'ningu, just as he swallowed the young men in the Dreaming Era; and in the old days they had to stop away from womenfolk from a period of two weeks to two months, symbolizing their stay inside the belly of the Snake. When the period of ceremonies is finished they return as new men (for Lu'ningu vomited up the young men dead). In the *djunggawon* the sacred ritual is associated more with women, because of the Wauwalak, and the novices may be seen constantly: "for those Wauwalak were vomited quickly, and were soon alive".

It is the practice, in the Kunapipi, to send messengers in all direc- 773
tions, notifying various groups that a ceremony is to take place.
Young male postulants are also sent with their guardians, and their 796
going symbolizes "vomiting". That is, in leaving their home camp and 203
going to another some distance away, they are being vomited through the air to the strange place by Lu'ningu (in other versions, by Julunggul). And when they eventually return, together with alien groups who are to attend the Kunapipi ceremony, they are swallowed again "just as the Wauwalak were", or like the young men in the

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[2] In regions where the Kunapipi is more or less indigenous, the sound of the [534]
bullroarer is the Fertility Mother's voice, and the object itself symbolizes her uterus. *Vide* Chapters IX–XI. In other areas, the bullroarer represents the penis, and its symbolism depends sometimes on its shape and sound.

● 773 Dreaming Period. When they first leave their home camp they are painted with red-ochre and arm-blood, which represent the blood
796 of the Wauwalak. That is, for the purpose of the ritual they become the Two Sisters, and are swallowed by Julunggul; and on their emer-
203 gence from the ritual, they are revivified just as were the women. On their returning home, they are again smeared with red-ochre and arm blood before entering the sacred Kunapipi ground.

In all the rituals we find the main theme of the Wauwalak's adven-
773 ture with Julunggul; but subsidiary Pythons are present, and tend to
796 confuse this aspect of the doctrine. There are Lu'ningu, the Julunggul herself (either alone, or with her husband playing an active or inactive
776 part), and the group of young snakes who watched the actual swallowing of the Wauwalak. Another python, an unmarried male, is associated with Gru:awona, where he still lives in his spirit form. He threw up a great amount of earth and formed a hill; then he dug up more earth, and formed another hill with a high bank at one side. Under this bank he lives, beside the deep pool; here the water is continually swirling, and its surface is the colour of the rainbow. Close by, at Muruwul, it is said, is a rainbow reaching up into the sky: that is Julunggul "twisting up" to catch the Wauwalak. It was here, at Muruwul, that man first "took part for that Snake" (see myth above); "for that Snake got to be Dreaming *mareiin* for us, because he swallowed the Wauwalak. Now we make that Wauwalak
[778] *murlk* on our sacred ground, in just the same way as it was first made at Muruwul. In it we place the long wooden *julunggul* 'trumpet', all painted and decorated in totemic designs, for the *djunggawon*, or the *uwar* log 'drum' for the *ngu:rlmak*. And instead of Julunggul swallowing the Wauwalak, it swallows the young boys we send out to the rituals".

In the Kunapipi the two long *jelmalandji* emblems are erected, but they cannot "talk"; "we have to make sound for them, so we twirl a bullroarer". This is called, in translation, the "shout side", because, informants explain, "those two *jelmalandji* couldn't speak, and we have to make own language for them". Orthodox versions stress that the *jelmalandji* are the two Snakes, the male and female Julunggul,[3] standing up looking about after having swallowed the Wauwalak and the child, and talking to other Pythons on the Wessels and elsewhere.

773 The *murlk* or hut, also called *bambu:la* (a very sacred term), is not
778 used to any extent in the Kunapipi, but it is present in both the
796 *djunggawon* and the *ngu:rlmak*. As well as being the hut in which the

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346 [3] In central-western Northern Territory these *jelmalandji* are said to represent both the Fertility Mother and the Rainbow Snake (a superimposition of the snake on the Mother); at Birrundudu, the *jelmalandji* had pearl-shell eyes, and other decorations. And in some versions (see later) one *jelmalandji* is the Snake, and the other the "cabbage" palm growing at Muruwul (the latter serves to symbolize the Julunggul).

Wauwalak sheltered, and into which the Julunggul came, the *murlk* 773 symbolizes the uterus of the Mother (the Wauwalak or Djanggawul). 778 Old aborigines say: "You know, when the Julunggul went into the 796 hut, we mean that a penis is entering a woman's vagina, and this hut 796 is a uterus too: that is why we have it on the sacred ground, for it 346 reminds us that everything must come from the Mother's uterus. That is how we came in the Dreaming; and people still continue to come in that way, don't they? And why do we have that Julunggul? Well, don't we have to have a penis to open up and inseminate the woman, so that she can give birth to children? And when the Julunggul swallows the Wauwalak, that is like a penis being swallowed by a vagina, only we put it the other way around. Now, when we hold our big rituals, we do the very same things, because we want [789] the seasons to come, and things to grow, and people to be born: that is the real meaning of what we do".

The Kunapipi rituals have been described in some detail by Dr. 114 Warner (*op. cit.* pp. 290–311), and the reader is referred to this for comparisons. We will mention only various features found in the 796 Yirrkalla region, indicating their relation to the Wauwalak mythology, and interpreting (from native explanations) the actions of the neophytes. It is beyond the scope of this work to record minute details of each stage of the ceremony, for this would entail description of dancing and many irrelevant actions, individual interpretations, and the whole interaction of men and women in and away from the sacred ground. Some of the Kunapipi songs, used both on the sacred ground and in the main camp, are given in Chapters VII and VIII, and these reveal certain details not treated here.

* * * *

The Kunapipi is held usually in the dry season, when food is 796 plentiful; for during this ceremony people are reaping the benefits of performances held in the previous year, and at the same time are preparing for the coming wet season and the subsequent growth of food. Ceremonies may extend over a period of two weeks to two months, and in unusual cases as long as two years. But now, when [797] the Mission frowns on the Kunapipi and its attendant rituals, it may be brought to a close after a few days with the result that much of the [177] intricate symbolism is omitted. The principal Kunapipi leader is usually a man of the Li:alauwermiri or an affiliated linguistic group, [614] or one whose totemic *rangga*, *mareiin* objects, or song cycle are associated with Muruwul sacred well and the Wauwalak. In the [616] Yirrkalla region the Kunapipi leaders may have come from Rose River, being members of groups which are in other respects culturally alien, or from *dua* clans near Rose River who have obtained the Kunapipi from further south.

796 Pythons. One sits on the thighs of the other in the trench, and they
535 have "coitus". These ceremonies are spread over a number of days,
831 often with a certain amount of repetition.

In the meantime, the *jiritja* men have been making the *jelmalandji*
796 emblems. It is said that "the *jiritja* have got a *dua* job", and they hunt
778 all the *dua* away from the special place near the sacred ground where
the manufacture is in progress. This "giving the job" to the *jiritja* is
[616] termed *ir'wondji* or *maralwa*. They must be paid with food, clothing,
tobacco and indigenous objects, not on the sacred ground but in the
main camp. The *jelmalandji* are twelve to twenty feet in length, and
about two and a half feet wide at the centre. They are formed with a
solid pole, around which pads of grass and paperbark (and in these
days blankets and bagging) are tied with native fibres. The outer
covering of bark is then smeared with arm blood and red-ochre, on
to which is fastened birds' down or wild cotton so that a meandering
pattern is formed, symbolizing Julunggul. At the apex of the "post"
[301] is a bunch of cockatoo feathers "like a man wears in his hair". Both
jelmalandji, one larger than the other, have similar designs. But
although one represents Julunggul, the other is said to be the
"cabbage" or "wild coconut" (*gulwiri*) palm, which was standing
near the Wauwalak's hut, or at the palm-tree swamp from which the
blood was washed down to the sacred well (or billabong). Aborigines
●[773] explain, "they made the Snake out of that tree", meaning either that
the first *jelmalandji* was constructed from the palm tree, or that the
Snake itself was derived from it. The latter is probably correct, for
this "wild coconut" palm is said to be the spirit of Julunggul: "their
spirits were standing in the shape of palm trees near Muruwal, when
the Julunggul emerged from the well to swallow the Wauwalak".

While the *jiritja* are making the *jelmalandji*, the *dua* prepare the
796 feather down for body decoration: this has come from the *jiritja*,
237 who are paid for it. It is the *dua* who play the most important part in
301 the ceremonial dancing; and while the final touches are being put to
616 the *jelmalandji*, the *dua* actors decorate themselves, sticking on the
feathers with arm blood. When everything is ready, the two moiety
[783] groups meet each other, and rub sweat over one anothers' eyes;[6]
after this, each group may see what the other has done. The *jiritja*
examine the body designs of the *dua*, and the latter may observe the
jelmalandji.

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[6] That is, the *jiritja* rub sweat from their armpits over the eyes of the *dua*, and *vice versa*. This process is carried out when new *rangga* objects or *marelin* ceremonies are seen for the first time, or when novices or visitors are observing sacred dancing or ceremonial emblems (objects, body or bark paintings, and so on). It means that their eyes may now be opened, they can now see "with sacredness". "The old people have to do this to us before we can see"; for, as one informant explained, "It is like moving over some of the old Law to the youngest (younger generation), and we get trouble if we look straight away". It is called *bunggurun'mirijunnu*.

copulation to take place between two "cousins" (*mukul* and *gurung*), 796
who were normally tabu-ed relatives, formally unable to talk to one 835
another, and classified as mother-in-law and son-in-law.[10] That is, [602]
the sacredness of the occasion demanded that sexual intercourse take
place between individuals who were at other times tabu. Such coitus
would, on the sacred ground, be considered far more potent, from [842]
the point of view of fertility, than that between persons who were
classified as "husband" and "wife", were of different moieties, and
were comparatively easy of access even if not living together.

Coitus between *mukul* "cousins" at ceremonial periods was 796
termed *ngirimbu'njamari'gwu:wa*, loosely translated as "living with
one's cousin for *now* or to-day (that is, for a little while)". Their 835
coitus was said to result in "starting a baby in the female *mukul*": 616
and this was later looked upon as belonging, spiritually at least, to
the male *mukul*. Both *mukul* would be of the same moiety; and the
child produced from such a union, which normally would be considered
incestuous, would by taking the moiety of its father (for
descent of the moiety is patrilineal) also be taking that of its mother.
Recognition of the fact that a child would be born of this ceremonial
intercourse between two *mukul*, and the parentage acknowledged,
demonstrates one aspect of these people's knowledge of
physiological paternity.[11] The reason for the carrying out of incestuous
intercourse on the sacred ground, for ceremonial purposes, is [773]
reflected in the Wauwalak mythology; for it will be recalled that the
elder Wauwalak sister had incestuous relations with a clansman (of
the same moiety) before coming to Muruwul, and as a result of this
intercourse, a child was born. But although the elder Wauwalak had
sexual relations with a man who was of the same moiety as herself,
the child apparently took not *dua*, its actual father's moiety, but
jiritja, as if it had had a *jiritja* father (*vide* Wauwalak myth, Chapter
III). "We do it", aborigines say, "because of that Wauwalak: that
is why two *mukul* copulate, and their child is acknowledged".

Usually, however, it seems that intercourse takes place between 796
a man and his classificatory brother's wife; but exceptions do occur 835
which may normally be considered incestuous or "wrong-way".
Even before the actual ceremonial intercourse takes place, as a
climax to the Kunapipi, copulation between Kunapipi partners

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10. This ceremonial copulation with a *mukul* still occurs in the Rose River region. *Vide* Chapter V, which describes a drawing of this ritual.
11. This, aborigines say, "happened in the old times, when the old people had this Kunapipi (suggesting that the Kunapipi was introduced at an early period); we changed from that. Now we only get the daughter of that *mukul*, but in the old time we should have got the *mukul*". But other information casts some doubt as to whether this practice of having ceremonial intercourse with a *mukul* took place only in the past. For example, it is said: "our old people married their *mukul* in the old days, and *now we do it* (that is, copulate) in the Kunapipi, in memory of those old times".

of the ground, but is careful not to look over towards his wife. 796
Both of these variations are known at Yirrkalla, but are recognized 786
as taking place outside their own Kunapipi area.

A man or woman will rarely refuse the ritual Kunapipi obligations 837
of having coitus, or giving and receiving presents. Their frank attitude
towards the question of sexual relations, and their understanding
of the importance of such ritualized copulation, predetermines
their full acceptance. Moreover, there is an obvious content
of enjoyment, for both men and women are stimulated by the precoitus [832]
dancing and interchange of jokes. Should there be refusal,
caused perhaps by the dislike of a certain Kunapipi partner, that
man or woman is soon obliged to conform, for the thwarted partner [753]
will threaten to send Julunggul to the other and so cause sickness.

The initial incestuous relations of the Wauwalak Sisters with [773]
clansmen, as we have seen, are cited in explanation of this ceremonial
copulation.[15] There is also the deeper intent of fertility: the [789]
symbolic spiritual fructification of the Mother. There is a tendency
to regard this sexual exchange of wives as providing an element of
"danger"; for here are men and women copulating with the wives
and husbands of others, virtually under their eyes and with one [835]
another's full (that is, in theory) sanction, and in "older times" with
tabu-ed relatives. All is made possible on the sacred ground, under
the "divine" sanction of the great Ancestral Beings and the Mother.
The inclusion of ceremonial copulation in the Kunapipi is said to
"raise its status to that of *mari* (mother's mother's brother, of the
older generation)", but not to the high position retained by the
ngu:rlmak, or the *dua* and *jiritja nara* Djanggawul and Laintjung
rituals.

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On the morning following the ritual intercourse, the final group of 796
Kunapipi ceremonies is performed.

Just before dawn, all the *dua* men assemble at one end of the sacred 881
ground, and the *jiritja* men at the other. The women have returned 778
to the main camp, and the young initiates are sitting with their
guardians. All the men are painted with white paint, spraying it over [302]
one another from their mouths; and most have spears. They begin
to clap their spears, one against the other, and dance towards each
other, changing sides. The bullroarers begin to twirl at this juncture,
and the women answer their sound from the main camp. The men's [535]
dancing continues till sunrise, when the two moiety groups dance
down to the boundary between the ceremonial ground and the main [616]
camp, taking the young boys with them. Here, to the accompaniment
of the bullroarers' sound and ritual calling, they erect the

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[15] *Vide* L. Warner, *op. cit.* pp. 307–8, who also provides a native interpretation of this aspect.

796 see the young initiates coming out of the bushes, emerging from the
uterus, all covered with red-ochre that symbolizes "the spring blood
881 of the Wauwalak". And the men call out to the women saying, "See
778 those young men covered with the saliva of that Snake"; "but really,"
and the women are not officially supposed to know this, "they are
covered with the spring blood". The women begin to call out, and
return dancing to the main camp.

The *djepalmandji* are knocked down, and the young boys are taken to the men's camp. That night, "outside" Kunapipi songs are sung, and the men dance around the boys. Then with the men leading, and the initiates following, they all dance off in single file to the sacred ground.

Here the initiates' headbands are removed, and returned to the
Kunapipi leader for use in the next rituals. After some sacred sing-
[302] ing, all the men, together with the young boys, paint themselves
completely with red-ochre; at the same time, in the main camp, all
the other men, women and children, whether *dua* or *jiritja*, do like-
wise. On everyone's back is outlined the Julunggul Snake, "so that
[532] you can't see it". (The snake design is merged with the general red-
ochring, so that only a bare outline is visible.) This design is sometimes extended across the chest or breasts, from left to right, to join the main snake pattern on the back; "in the beginning those Wauwalak did this, because of that big Julunggul". This painting is termed the "baptizing" (that is, ceremonial purification), and all are brushed with smoking ironwood branches which have been held in the fire.

The men return from the sacred ground to the main camp, and sitting in groups begin to sing the "outside" Kunapipi, while the women dance in the same way as they did during the first rituals. The young initiates return that evening to the single men's camp. The purification ceremony and singing may be held on succeeding evenings for about a week to a fortnight, when it is felt that sufficient precautions have been taken to prevent sickness.

This concludes the Yirrkalla Kunapipi ritual.

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773 Although we shall return in succeeding chapters to the ritual and
796 interpretation of the Kunapipi, it may be as well, at this juncture, to
survey briefly the foregoing material. It is apparent that Kunapipi
794 ritual has been closely related to the Wauwalak mythology; this
expresses symbolically the aborigines' conception of an "eternal"
[805] sequence of the seasons, and the reproductive faculties of Nature, of
which man is an incidental but dominating feature. This fundamental
[776] belief is crystallized in a Fertility Mother (the Wauwalak as a trans-
mutation of the Djanggawul) who embodies this concept, while the
male representative of fructification also is present.

The following Table summarizes these aspects.

TABLE

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		Materialistic Aspect of Yirrkalla Religion	Spiritual Aspect of Yirrkalla Religion
Fundamental Aspects		Nature; Seasons; Vegetable and animal growth; reproductive faculties of man; survival of the group; basic drives (for example, food and sex)	
Repositories of Divine Power		Djanggawul; the Wauwalak. (Concept of Fertility Mother and Penis Snake): alone capable of releasing the power which brings about continuation	Unquestioning faith
Expressions and Instruments	**Mythology**	Djanggawul and Wauwalak Cycles (explaining the power of the "Divine" Beings)	Ideology, Religious philosophy and meditation
	Ritual	Sacred ritual and ceremony (of which the Kunapipi is merely one aspect). An instrument by which the "divine" power is released	Absorption in ritual as a "divine" purpose (spiritual edification)
Achievement		Production of necessities for physical continuance and survival. (Maintenance of *status quo*)	Spiritual growth. (Laws and ideals based on the behaviour of the "divine" Beings)

Here we observe the belief that ritual, as an expression of the sacred mythology, releases the "power" vested in the Divine Ancestral Beings for the ultimate welfare of the tribal group. This is primarily a materialistic aim, for its specific intent is the production of necessities for the physical continuation and survival of the people, the bringing into force of an elaborate mechanism that expresses man's innate selfishness and egocentricity. But as an adjunct to this thesis, Yirrkalla religion has an underlying non-materialistic thread, that is an expression of spiritual growth. Based as it is on an unquestioning acceptance of the religious doctrine, a belief in the omnipo-

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773 tence and immutability of the "eternal" Beings, a religious philosophy
796 has been developed among the mature "thinkers" of the group.
796 This finds its outlet in the mental exercise of meditation, interpretation,
789 and explanation, but is nevertheless restricted by the deep
794 faith that is a living part of all its manifestations. Within the limitation
of defined premises, a certain degree of flexibility is apparent;
philosophic concepts have not remained static, nor ideology stagnant.
Throughout the centuries of religious development, alien ideas
[177] have been considered and discussed, even when they were unorthodox,
and apparently opposed to indigenous theology. They have been
accepted or discarded; but all have, in this way, served to illuminate
and extend the basic principles which serve to explain to the aborigines
man's place in his environment, and his inter-relationship with
the "Divine" Beings who are possessed of the power of animation
and are the seat of knowledge.

796 Several interesting points are raised in our description of Kunapipi ritual.

In all Kunapipi ceremonies, throughout the whole region mentioned
in Chapter II, basic words referring to the sacred objects,
ceremonies, and so on, are very much the same; for instance,
[184] *nanggaru*, *kanala*, *jelmalandji*, *djamala*, *gumugu*, and *djepalmandji*.
These terms serve as a connecting link, for their meanings do not
change drastically from one area to another, even when, as at Yirrkalla,
the Kunapipi ritual itself has been superimposed on a relatively
indigenous theme. The dominating theory behind the Kunapipi
has preserved, more or less intact, its original intent.

Another outstanding aspect is the important rôle undertaken by
562 women throughout the performance of the Kunapipi ceremonies.
796 At no time do they feel themselves secluded from purely male
activity, while at intervals they take an active part. They know that
the rituals are principally concerned with peculiarly feminine funcions,
and that men are carrying out the more strenuous features of
ceremonial life. "These rituals," said one informant, "are just like a
man copulating with a woman, he does all the hard working so that
the woman can carry out the really important business of childbirth."
This may be a one-sided attitude, but it does adequately
express local native reasoning in this matter. The question of
whether women are profane, as opposed to the aura of sacredness
pervading a male participant at such a ceremony, does not enter into
Yirrkalla thinking. Even when ritually tabu because of afterbirth or
[841] menstruation blood (as in the case of the Wauwalak at the sacred
Muruwul billabong), a woman is regarded as sacred, for her blood
and her other activities themselves are sacred, and are focal points
in the religious doctrine. And all sacred ceremony, these aborigines
[773] say, was inspired by women. "In the beginning men had nothing, and
women possessed all the ritual; so men stole this from the women
..."—(Djanggawul and Wauwalak mythology).

537 tion are discussed in detail: this aspect will, however, be dealt with
796 later.[7]

Here we are concerned principally with sexual intercourse on the
833 sacred ground, and defloration is incidental; but it does have an
881 important bearing on Kunapipi mythology. (*Vide* Chapter X, Song
● [773] 45, when it is mentioned that the Mungamunga were "opened" for
coitus; the ritual in the Rose River Kunapipi commemorates this
[171] mythological event, while other examples could be taken from Yirrkalla mythology to substantiate this rite of defloration.)

On the far right hand side of the drawing are male *gurung* having coitus with their normally tabu-ed female *mukul* (*vide* Chapter IV), as Kunapipi sexual partners (2), while other men (9) await their turn. It is these men who first "open up" the young girls with the boomerang, and then copulate with them. This rite is termed the *nukanmiri*. The drawing of the man and woman performing the sexual act is executed in the stylized traditional manner, so that the two figures merge (2): the man bends forward, grasping his partner at the back so that his arms pass under hers, while the woman clasps him with hands gripped at his back. She is lying on the ground with legs apart, her thighs resting on his hips, and her feet are crossed at his back; *vide* Chapter IV. footnote 14.

Ranged along and around the boomerang (1) are the brothers (3)
of the girls and women with whom the men are copulating; they
stand with their backs turned. They do not look at their sisters hav-
[593] ing coitus, in case they should be "shamed" (a manifestation of the
deep-rooted local tabu between brother and sister). Instead, they sing while this is taking place, and do not themselves have ceremonial intercourse; their turn comes when the next Kunapipi is performed.

A focal point on the left hand side of the drawing is the *gundaru jelmalandji* (4), held by one man (10), while below it is a row of men (6) who are actual or classificatory husbands to the women having coitus on the opposite section (that is, 2). These husbands (like those at 9) await their turn with women (5) who are the "wives" (actual or otherwise) of the men on the opposite side (9); these women are already having coitus (5), and beside them (11) other men are waiting. Around the *nanggaru* (8) are men (7) dancing the opossum dance: they are the fathers (actual or classificatory) of both groups of women (at 5 and 2).

The fifth drawing,[8] Plate XIII and text figure 6, in black, red, green, blue, yellow and pencil, shows the sacred ground, with its essential emblems and plan: women are awaiting ceremonial intercourse,

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[7] *Vide* R. Berndt, *Love Songs of Arnhem Land.* In Chapter IV it was mentioned that only married women attended the Kunapipi ritual of ceremonial copulation; this was a Yirrkalla variant.

[8] Reference: No. 3, *Field-Notes*, Book 28, Series B, R. Berndt.

right down. The girl's legs are tied to the posts, so that her legs are 831
outstretched between them. (We know of no other reference to the 794
actual tying down of the Kunapipi girl who has been chosen for 796
ceremonial coitus. As a young girl is specified, this probably refers
to ritual defloration which has been mentioned briefly elsewhere— [114]
vide Chapters IV, V and X. It suggests also that force is used to hold
the girl, a feature which should not normally accompany this rite;
moreover, promiscuity is such a feature of this area, with the breaking
down of indigenous regulations governing sexual conduct, that
one would not expect it to be necessary.)

The men then paint themselves, and line up for dancing. There may
be two or three hundred men on the sacred ground. The headman
begins to beat his clapping sticks, while the dancing men clap their
hands rhythmically to the music and song, and call out intermittently.
Then the first man, at the head of the long line of dancing men, leaves
the line and goes into the shade and copulates with the Kunapipi girl; [833]
the other men continue clapping their hands and calling out.

Under the girl, immediately beneath her vulva, a small depression
has been dug and in it has been placed a shallow paperbark dish;
this catches the semen and vaginal juices that come out of the girl.

When the first man has left the hut, another takes his place; this
is continued until all the men in the line have entered the hut and
copulated, and their semen has flowed from the girl into the paperbark
container.

By this time, the container is full; and after a rest, the men remove
it from the hut and begin to paint themselves with the semen; then [302]
they continue their dancing, which goes on from early morning until
sunset. Ceremonial coitus takes place each day for several weeks,
different girls being chosen for each ceremony." Other rituals relating
to the Kunapipi are also performed in a sequence similar to that
already discussed.

It should be mentioned that the reason given for thus decorating
the postulants' bodies with designs in semen and vaginal juices is [842]
the belief in the fructifying potency of the former. The act of
ceremonial coitus is itself symbolic of fertilization, and the subse- [789]
quent increase of human and the natural species; semen is the
essence which causes pregnancy; and this natural and logical belief
is an integral part of the rituals of the Kunapipi fertility cult.

There is also an association between semen and the saliva of the
Julunggul Snake (*vide* Chapter III, *et seq.*); it was with this substance [773]
that Julunggul smeared the Wauwalak and the child prior to swallowing.
This "saliva" is represented by white pipe-clay in parts of
the Kunapipi, and it is with this that Kunapipi neophytes are painted. [386]

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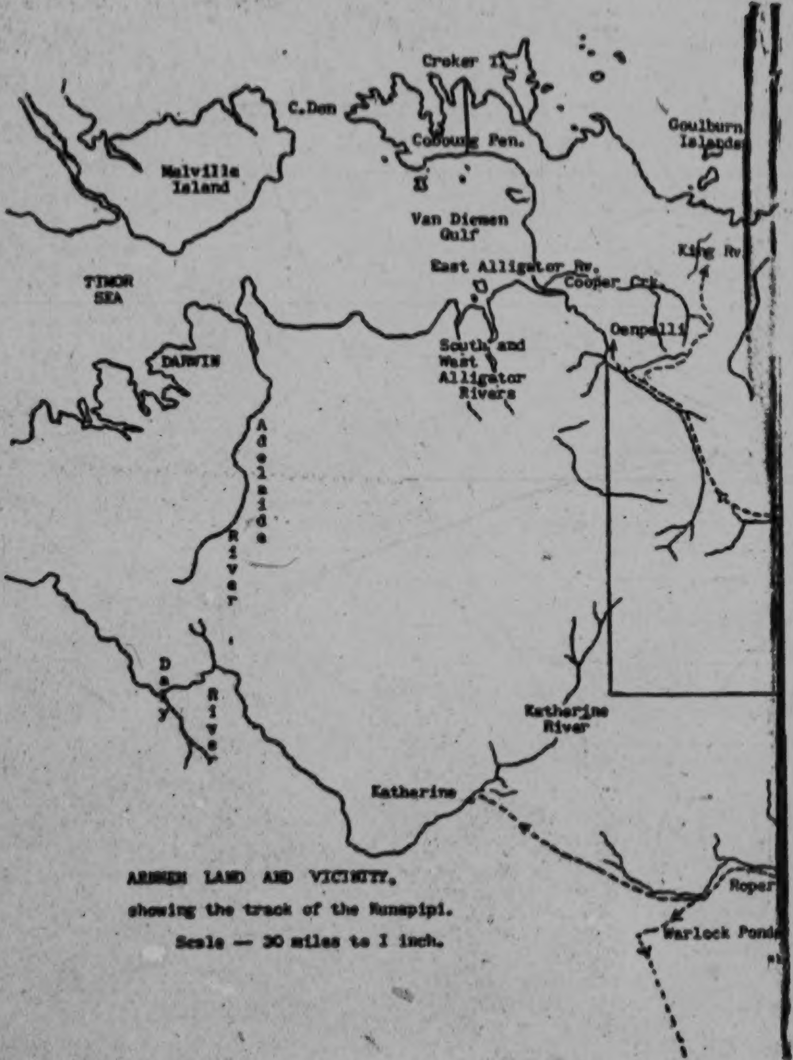
Croker I.
C.Don
Cobourg Pen.
Goulburn Islands
Melville Island
Van Diemen Gulf
East Alligator Rv.
Cooper Crk.
King Rv.
Oenpelli
TIMOR SEA
DARWIN
South and West Alligator Rivers
Adelaide River
Daly River
Katherine River
Katherine
Roper
Warlock Ponds

ARNHEM LAND AND VICINITY,
showing the track of the Kunapipi.
Scale — 30 miles to 1 inch.

[Back End Map (A)]

6: Berndt E-5 (1946-1947) 1951

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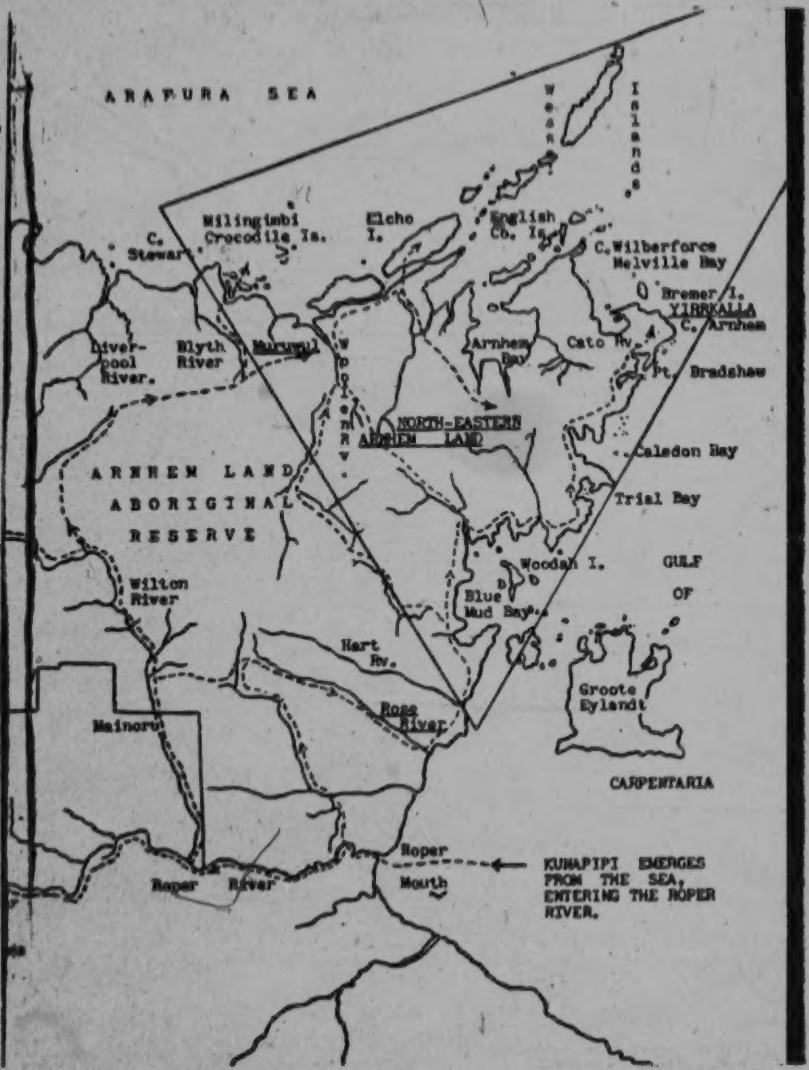
ARAFURA SEA
Wessel Islands
Milingimbi
Crocodile Is.
Elcho I.
English Co. Is.
C. Wilberforce
Melville Bay
C. Stewart
Bremer I.
YIRRKALLA
C. Arnhem
Liverpool River.
Blyth River
Murungul
Woolen Rv.
Arnhem Bay
Cato Rv.
Pt. Bradshaw
NORTH-EASTERN ARNHEM LAND
Caledon Bay
Trial Bay
ARNHEM LAND ABORIGINAL RESERVE
Woodah I.
GULF OF
Wilton River
Blue Mud Bay
Hart Rv.
Groote Eylandt
Rose River
Mainoru
CARPENTARIA
Roper Mouth
Roper River
KUNAPIPI EMERGES FROM THE SEA, ENTERING THE ROPER RIVER.

[Back End Map (B)]

Illustrations

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Second panel, above: the *nviga*, 'young' fresh-water snake dance, postulants each holding spear and womera.

below: *djirindlili* calling of the invocations (*bugali*) on the *gararag* pole. Three men are dancing around him, invoking.

Third panel, above: tide flowing in.

below: the Sea dance, flowing water, etc.

Fourth panel, above: Flying Fox dance—two men on *gararag* pole.

below: Water dancing.

Fifth panel, above: two men dance the male and female goanna.

below: the goanna *rangga*, which is danced by the two men shown above.

band: two *mauwulan rangga*.

Sixth panel, above: wild duck dancing.

below: red parakeet dancing.

778 5 The *rangga* emblems are displayed on the sacred ground, while special songs relating to them are sung. 32

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This is the central panel of a long drawing showing Jelangbara. In the lower right-hand panel, the Djanggawul Brother is holding a *ngainmara* on his thighs (this symbolizes the younger Sister, and his drawing it on to his thighs refers to the conventional position taken in coitus). He then removed *rangga* (*djuda* and *mauwulan*) emblems, shown beside and above him. 33

The younger Sister is seen in the middle of the left-hand panel, with *rangga* at each side.

The central band, with the two *djanda* goanna, represents the sacred shade.

7 *From left to right:* 33

First panel (left), above: *djuda rangga*.

below: a black bird on Gagubam Island, near Port Bradshaw. Flying foxes hanging from the sacred *djuda* tree.

Second panel (right): male and female goanna, frightened by the approach of the Djanggawul, and about to dive into the billabong at Gagubam Island.

above: two goanna *rangga* representing these two goanna, and at the extreme right are two *djuda rangga*.

Illustrations

8 The showing of the Goanna Tail *rangga*, with its parakeet-feathered pendants and decorations, by a ceremonial leader. 80 778 516

9 Postulants dancing the Incoming Tide, coming on to the sacred ground; they imitate the *rangga* folk, who emerged from the Sisters. 81 796 535

10 Invocations are called, while *jiritja* moiety postulants await the emergence of the sacred emblems. 81

11 Left hand panel: a turtle, which has entered a *nguinmara*, after being caught by two men in a canoe; it is surrounded by waves, at Jelangbara. 96 532 773

Second panel, above: Miralaidj, pregnant, showing the long clitoris, on her arrival at Jelangbara. She holds a Goanna Tail and a *mauwulan rangga*.

below: arm-bands with feathered pendants, hanging from a rail of the sacred shade.

Third panel, above: Bildjiwuraroiju, also pregnant; she had been carrying a Goanna Tail *rangga*, but it had slipped from her grasp and fallen to the ground (below, same panel).

Fourth (right-hand) panel, above: the Brother, holding *djuda rangga* which have almost become trees; he is about to plant them.

below: the two *djuda rangga* 'copied' from those the Brother is holding.

12 A ceremonial leader representing the Djanggawul Brother after his landing at Port Bradshaw. He bends forward to taste the fresh water which gushed up after he had inserted the *mauwulan rangga*. 96 796

13 At Gumararanggu, Port Bradshaw (the Yirrkalla side of Jelangbara). Beach and sandhills are shown, with male and female goanna (*rangga*). The central panel shows an Aboriginal camp, comprising people left by the Djanggawul. 97 532

On the right-hand side, the upper panel shows the sun rising, casting its rays.

Below is Belabinja, where the Djanggawul first tasted fresh water when they landed at Jelangbara (*vide* Song 28).

14 The sacred *djanda* goanna on the sandhill at the Place of the Mauwulan (see, e.g., Song 33). 97

Illustrations

196 778 15 Calling the *bugali* invocations in front of the sacred *nara* shade, before the emergence of a totemic being. 144

16 The Goanna emblem emerges from the shade, which in this case is constructed from iron. 144

532 778 17 This design represents various sacred shades belonging to different linguistic groups. 145

Left-hand panel, top: sacred goanna on *djuda rangga* tree: the Djanggawul Brother with his *djuda* and *mauwulan* and beating sticks.

below: goanna on *djuda* tree; and sacred Goanna Tail *rangga*.

The two panels are divided by goanna tracks.

Right-hand panel, top: goanna on *djuda* tree; tracks, and sacred design.

below: goanna on *djuda* tree: one Djanggawul Sister with beating sticks, beside Goanna Tail *rangga*.

778 196 18 *Nara* postulants representing male and female Goanna. The Goanna Tail *rangga* rests across the younger man's neck. 145

19 The Djanggawul Goanna emerges from the shade. 160

20 Postulants in stylized attitudes, with the Goanna Tail *rangga*; sacred shade, at the Place of the Mauwulan. 160

778 196 534 21 Two men singing, rhythmically clapping sticks, and blowing the long, sacred Julunggul Rainbow Snake or Rock Python drone pipe, above the posturing sacred goanna of the Place of the Mauwulan. 161

22 To the rhythmic beat of clapping sticks, the Julunggul Rock Python drone pipe emerges from the *dua* moiety *nara* shade. Postulants are lying on their backs, huddled together, with the *rangga* emblem resting upon them. 161

532 773 23 Left-hand panel: Bildjiwuraroiju, Miralaidj and the Djanggawul Brother (top). The Two Sisters have long clitorises, and the Brother a long penis, which drag on the ground, and resemble *djuda rangga*. They hold goanna tail and 208

mauwulan rangga, one in each hand. People (symbolized by dots) have come from the Two Sisters: a small circle of *rangga* folk is seen dancing, among them the Two Wauwalag Sisters. 532 773

Right-hand panel, above: the Djanggawul Brother is inserting his hand into Miralaidj's vagina, and removing *rangga* folk, shown flowing from her. *Rangga* emblems are ranged beside the Brother and Sister. This took place at Dulmulwondeinbi, near Marabai.

Right-hand panel, below: Bildjiwuraroiju, opposite Miralaidj. The Djanggawul Brother has lifted aside their clitorises, and put his hand into their vaginae. People flow out, male *rangga* folk on one side, and females on the other. This took place at Jalwuljalwul.

24 *From left to right:* 208

First panel: Miralaidj as central figure; on each side of her is a woman, one (above) being her elder Sister and one (below) Bammarimarawi, her daughter and 'sister'.

Afterbirth blood flows from Miralaidj into a hole, and she stands holding two poles; as soon as the hole is filled, it overflows and runs from each side. It is after this that the elder Sister, by hitting the young Sister's hips, stops the flow of blood. Four rangga folk then come out (two men and two women).

Central panel of clapping-sticks (above), and two *mauwulan* with sacred dilly bags attached (below)—(penis and uterus symbols).

Right-hand panel, top: the sun comes up, casting its rays.

below: sunset on the mainland beyond Milingimbi, towards the west.

At Jelangbara.

25 Postulants (both Goanna actors) using the Goanna Tail *rangga* emblem; one supports it on his shoulder, while the other guides it. 209 778 796

26 *Jiritja* moiety *nara*: *rangga* are removed from the shade, and postulants dance. 209 778 796 535

27 Dancing with the *jiritja* moiety *rangga*: dust rises, as dancing feet pound the sacred ground. 224

FOREWORD

THE Djanggawul religious cult of north-eastern and north-central Arnhem Land has been selected for detailed study because it is more important to the Aborigines themselves than other religious cults in that region. It is older established than, for example, the well-known Wauwalak cycle[1] which sponsors the *djunggawon*, *kunapipi* and *ngurlmag* rituals. The Wauwalak themselves are really the daughters of the Djanggawul, while the *kunapipi* and *ngurlmag* have both been introduced into eastern Arnhem Land. The Djanggawul myth substantiates and gives traditional sanction to the performance of its relevant rituals, known as the *dua nara*. *Dua* is the name of the moiety primarily concerned with this myth and its rituals; the opposite moiety, the *jiritja*, has a counterpart in the *jiritja nara*, sanctioned by Laintjung, an Ancestral Being who is usually described in conjunction with his son, Banaitja. The Djanggawul, Laintjung, Banaitja and the Wauwalak are the principal ancestral characters who, in eastern Arnhem Land, serve as institutors of religious ritual, dogma and behaviour. However, the Djanggawul Brother and Sisters are by far the most important of these. The *dua nara* Djanggawul cult is also more conservative than, for example, that of Laintjung and Banaitja, for the latter has admitted alien elements, whereas the former has remained, as far as we can ascertain, more purely traditional. 794 773 [616]

During the course of field work in the Yirrkalla region of north-eastern Arnhem Land, the importance of Djanggawul ritual and songs was brought forcibly to my attention. The Aborigines 794 126

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[1] W. L. Warner, *A Black Civilization*, New York, 1937, pp. 244-334. See also R. Berndt, *Kunapipi*, Cheshire, Melbourne, 1951, Chapter III.

Chapter One

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DJANGGAWUL

DJANGGAWUL, used collectively, is a name given to three Ancestral Beings; alternatively, it may be Djangga or Djangg'gau. Usually it refers to two Sisters and a Brother, although in the Milingimbi version the latter is not mentioned.[1] In north-eastern Arnhem Land, as in the version presented in this volume, the Brother and his two Sisters are always represented. The Brother, known by himself as Djanggawul, is also called, less frequently, Ganjudingu.[2] His 'inside'[3] name is Gundanguru, which means the 'nail' or spike of a 'nail' fish; an alternative 'inside' name is Balwadjar, which has a similar meaning. The elder Sister is Bildjiwuraroiju (or Bildjiwuraru), a name derived from the sacred term *duldjijuldji*, meaning the point of the sacred *mauwulan rangga* emblem.[4] She has the alternative names of Reiwurjun, meaning, 'getting tired (after long paddling)', and referring to the Djanggawul's paddling from Bralgu to the Australian mainland; and of Ganinjara, which means also the point of the *mauwulan* (its point enters her vagina, for the *mauwulan* is a symbolic penis).

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[1] The presence of the Djanggawul Brother is not mentioned by L. Warner, *op. cit.*, pp. 333–40.

[2] The Milingimbi version calls the elder Sister Djanggawul (said to be a derivation of the name Gurulgurul, belonging to a *wongar* Dreaming man at Bralgu); the younger Sister is said to be called Ganjudingu (meaning the fin of the barramundi fish). Collectively they were also called Maijilwaru, which is a 'big' name.

[3] The use of 'inside' terms is confined to sacred songs; they may also be called on the sacred ground during ritual. Normally, they are used only by men fully acquainted with the relevant ideology, and very rarely in ordinary conversation.

[4] Also said to mean 'a long clitoris dragging'.

[831]

Significance of the Djanggawul

776 The younger Sister is usually called Miralaidj, Malalait or Mandalaidj, which means the 'younger' green-backed turtle called *dairui*. 773 She is also called Djurdjunga, 'clouds coming up', or Balmabalma, which means a 'sacred shade' used on the ritual *nara* ground; this latter has the 'inside' name Mal'marangu.

In the north-eastern Arnhem Land version these three are accompanied by Bralbral (or Barabara), who stands in relationship to them as *waridj* or *mari*, a mother's mother's brother's son's son. He has no other name, and appears only at the beginning of the myth and the song cycle.

773 831 Although these three principal Ancestral Beings are brother and sisters, one version of this story tells that the Brother Djanggawul had in the beginning only one Sister, Bildjiwuraroiju and that it was through his incestuous intercourse with her that Miralaidj was born. Miralaidj did not, however, call Bildjiwuraroiju and her brother mother and father: instead she called them respectively elder sister and brother. That is, 'one Sister came out from the big Sister; and this younger one called the other one sister because she came out first, long before Bildjiwuraroiju gave birth to the children who are said to be the direct ancestors of the Aborigines living to-day'. But Djanggawul had coitus with the younger Sister who actually, according to this version, is his own daughter. This incestuous behaviour is nothing unusual, for in the myth the Brother often has coitus with his two Sisters. To all intents and purposes, Bildjiwuraroiju and Miralaidj are treated as Sisters.

773 These Beings came from a far distant country, and on the way to the Arnhem Land mainland stopped at Bralgu, the *dua* moiety island of the dead. Bralgu is a mythical place, but some native informants say that it may perhaps be an island near Mornington (one of the Wellesley Islands in the Gulf of Carpentaria), or alternatively an island off the Cape York Peninsula.[1] To-day its geographical position remains unclarified, and it is still the Home of the Eternal Spirits, the spirits of departed ancestors as well as of those Beings who were there when the Djanggawul themselves visited the island. It is said, too, that the Djanggawul possessed at that time a far greater number of sacred objects, but because they had only a bark canoe to get to the Australian mainland they were obliged to leave many behind.

773 821 The ultimate origin of the Djanggawul is now shrouded in antiquity, and it is fruitless to hypothesize. They are said, however, to be closely associated with the Sun. One myth tells that the Sun,

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[1] Or, at Milingimbi, said to be near Mapoon Mission station off Cape York Peninsula. This place was suggested by informants who were attempting to place Bralgu in relation to some known site, indicating that it was somewhere in that direction.

a woman, possessed two daughters who were later to become 773 the Djanggawul Sisters. But while the Yirrkalla myth and song 821 cycle do not refer directly to them as Sun daughters, many symbolic references are made to the sun and to its warmth; in fact, the whole concept of the myth, with the growth of human beings and trees, and so on, depends on the presence of the Sun, through the agency of the Two Sisters. In the Milingimbi version this aspect is treated in great detail, if somewhat symbolically; one is left in no doubt as to who the two Sisters really were, and their affinity with the Sun. For example, the feathered strings from the *lindaridj* parakeet which they carried were symbolic of the sun's rays; they travelled from east to west, as the sun itself travels, and from their vulvae the sun's rays spread, while to-day one name for the disc of the [831] midday sun is *dagu*, *ganbai* or *dala*, meaning the Djanggawul Sisters' vulvae or vaginae.

There is little doubt, then, that the Sisters, if not the Brother, 776 are projections of the Sun. If they are not Sun Goddesses themselves, they are closely linked with the Sun. The question of whether or not it is legitimate to describe certain Aboriginal Ancestral Beings as gods and goddesses raises, of course, a number of problems. Nevertheless, these particular Ancestral Beings are themselves divine in that they possess creative abilities, and are sacred in the full sense of the word. From this point of view, the appellation 'god' or 'goddess' is in order; but by using it we do not in any way imply that these Aboriginal Ancestral Beings, or the sacred emblems they brought with them, are worshipped in the Christian sense. The concept of 'worshipping' is far removed from [782] conventional Aboriginal religious thought: things or Beings are held in reverence, or even in awe, but never worshipped in the way that we understand the term. Our choice of a title for these Beings, however, endowed as they are with all the attributes which go to form the idea of Godhead, is primarily a matter of terminology.

These Beings brought with them to the Arnhem Land coast 773 a variety of sacred emblems, which are material symbols of their 778 cult. First and foremost was the *ngainmara* mat, alternatively called *muralungul*, *dalwuldalwul* or *wagulwagul*; the latter term applies particularly to the mat's 'mouth' or opening. *Ngainmara* is a secular term, with *mania* as another alternative. This mat is the symbolic [831] uterus of either Sister, but it may also mean the whale, or simply a mat. Its attributes were so sacred, representing as it did the Uteri 778 of the Djanggawul, that it is no longer endowed with ritual value; it has passed generally into the society, and is used primarily by women. That is to say, its sacredness was of such intensity that it could not be kept for use in ceremonies alone, but became an

Significance of the Djanggawul

778 These material objects, then, such as the sacred *rangga*, bag and mat, are focal points, or symbols, through which we may grasp 831 the significance of the concept as a whole. The mat is a uterus 182 symbol; so is the whale, although used in this sense only incidentally. Here is the source of all life, for it was from the Uteri of the Sisters that the first people sprang. Moreover, these Aborigines have [842] recognized the importance of the sexual act in causing conception and pregnancy. This natural sequence of events has many parallels in the animal life they observe about them. Throughout the myth ●[773] direct references are made to sexual intercourse, while symbolic references in both the myth and songs are numerous. The *rangga* poles, the yam stick, *mauwulan*, *djuda* and *djanda* are themselves penis symbols, an interpretation made quite frankly by the Aborigines themselves. The poles, for instance, are kept hidden within the *ngainmara*, and removed from time to time for drying, thus symbolizing coitus (penis in vagina as a projection of the uterus), and drying the penis after intercourse when it has become 'wet' with semen and vaginal juices. Or the *mauwulan* is plunged into the earth, so that water gushes forth at its removal; this is compared to coitus, the removal of the penis from the vagina, and the subsequent flow of seminal and vaginal juices when the Sisters stand up again. Waterholes themselves are vulva symbols, used frequently [823 in Aboriginal song and mythology, while trees (for example, 824] the *djuda*) are penis symbols, and their roots are called by the term used for penis (*vide* songs). A great deal of this erotic symbolism is expressed in sacred ritual, in posturing and actions.

From this we see something of the importance of sexual inter- 831 course. To the Aborigines, as to us, sex and food are basic drives. Whatever subsidiary drives exist, these two are fundamental, for upon them human life, as they know it, depends. The Aborigines are apt to stress the importance of the sexual drive. 'How else', they say, 'can we continue as a group? By what other means can we obtain food except by its natural increase?' Thus even certain [824] forms of plant life are divided into male and female sexes. Sexual intercourse is felt to be necessary for survival, in so far as the human and animal world is concerned, although this survival depends ultimately on forces beyond the Aborigines' control—on seasonal fluctuation, and on the sun, and so we come back to the significance underlying the Djanggawul. The Aborigines of north-eastern and north-central Arnhem Land consequently pay much attention to 831 sexual matters, and their attitude towards this subject is one of 842 utmost frankness.[1] To them, sexual intercourse is an essential

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[1] *Vide* Introduction to *Sexual Behaviour in Western Arnhem Land* (R. and C. Berndt), Viking Fund Series in Anthropology, Yale University, 1951. No 16.

preliminary to pregnancy. Children in this area, for instance, are 831
called *judu* (*jutu*, usually employed in a singular sense), or *djamarguli* 842
(plural). The former word means 'semen'; that is, the child originated from the semen. The latter means 'through (or from) work'; to 'work' (*djama*) a female is to have coitus, and *djamarguli* is literally the 'result of working (or coitus)'.

Erotic references, then, in the Djanggawul cult merely conform 831
to the accepted pattern. To say that the Aborigine is concerned
unduly with the subject of sex, and derives a morbid satisfaction 182
from constant direct or symbolic reference to it, is to distort the 794
actual position. He is frankly interested in the workings of the human body, and in the satisfaction of its basic needs; and he recognizes the fundamental importance of the act, not only in ensuring the continuation of life, but also in helping to stabilize relations between members of both sexes, through their very interdependence. It is not unexpected, therefore, to find manifestations of this interest in Aboriginal religious emblems and mythology, ritual and song. Indeed, what more obvious means of expression could a simple group of people have? Here, in the Djanggawul doctrine, are crystallized their hopes and desires, related to their fundamental drives, co-ordinated with the natural resources and phenomena and with the environment which they know.

Numerous references are made to the removal of the *rangga* 778
from the *ngainmara*, a symbolic allusion also to the removal of 773
children from the wombs of the Sisters: for *rangga* are likened
to children, or human beings, and men and women may use this 182
term to refer to their bones. The spiritual content of the bones is the same as that of the sacred *rangga*, and has, moreover, been passed on from their ancestors—those who were originally removed from the Sisters. When, for example, postulants enter the sacred hut (= *ngainmara* = uterus) on the ritual ground, they are like
rangga being hidden away within the *ngainmara*. In a polygynous 595
marriage, too, the wives are said to be like *rangga*: their husband has collected them into a group, and has a monopoly over them as
a man has over his individual *rangga*. This likening of women to 562
sacred *rangga* is interesting, but probably derives from the fact that women themselves are said to be the source of ritual knowledge,[1] and consequently sacred.

There is much stress, too, on the maternal qualities of the 831
Djanggawul Sisters, although the Brother himself is of considerable
importance. The Two Sisters are mentioned far more frequently, 776
particularly in the Milingimbi version of the cycle, although this

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[1] *Vide* Chapters 2 and 3. (See also M. Mead, *Male and Female*, London, 1950, pp. 102-3.)

831 is a predominantly patrilineal society. The Two Sisters are Original Mothers of the various *dua* moiety clansfolk, as well as of the 776 *jiritja*. They are Mother Goddesses in the true sense of the term, for although they were allegedly instrumental in populating the greater part of eastern Arnhem Land, they are responsible also for all subsequent fertility. Aborigines call the Sisters 'Our Mothers'. When men cut the fringe of their sacred dilly bags, or perform ritual, they are the 'Sons of the Djanggawul'; when they enter the sacred ground, marked out in a special way, they are returning to their Mothers' uteri; when they enter the sacred hut on the ritual ground, they are also returning to their Mothers' uteri (or uterus, when one hut is used, referring to the elder Sister). The same theme is expressed symbolically in a variety of ways. The whole concept of the return to the Mother on ritual occasions is particularly interesting;[1] but we shall not digress to discuss the theoretical interpretation, as favoured by some modern psychoanalytic schools of thought.

773 The most important focal point of interest in the Djanggawul myth and songs is procreation, and its ramifications. In some draw- 532 ings from Yirrkalla the Two Sisters are depicted with people (or 831 children) 'flowing' out from their vulvae. Their legs are apart and flexed, their eyes open with tears running from the pain of child- 776 birth. This concept of people flowing from the Mothers' uteri is used in western-central Northern Territory in reference to the Kunapipi Mother,[2] who is also said to 'let postulants out from her womb during ceremonial time'. (This same theme is expressed, both symbolically and directly, at Yirrkalla and Millingimbi.) The relationship between the Djanggawul and the Kunapipi Mother is an interesting question, which unfortunately cannot be treated here.[3]

831 The Djanggawul were possessed of abnormally long genitalia. The Brother had an elongated penis, emphasizing, through exaggera- 776 tion, his masculine function in the fertility scheme. The Two Sisters had abnormally long clitorises,[4] a feature more difficult to explain. The Aborigines themselves offer no explanation, except that the *rangga* may have been derived from them. For example, when the penis and clitorises were eventually foreshortened, the

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[1] *Vide* R. Berndt, *Kunapipi*.

[2] *Vide* R. Berndt, *op. cit.*, Chapters II–IV, IX, and R. and C. Berndt, 'The Eternal Ones of the Dream' (being a discussion of Dr. G. Róheim's book of that name), *Oceania*, Vol. XVII, No. 1, pp. 67–78, three plates.

[3] Some mention has been made of this in *Kunapipi*, Chapters I *c* and III.

[4] *Vide* Chapters 2 and 3. The significance of the Sisters' clitorises is revealed in the songs.

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3. *Rangga* folk emerge from the Djanggawul Sisters.

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4. Various phases of the *nara* Djanggawul ceremonies.

[facing p. 17]

Chapter Two

THE DJANGGAWUL MYTH[1]

•113 In the beginning there were land and sky, animals and birds, foliage and trees. There was sea, too, in the waters of which were fish and other creatures; and upon the land were beings of totemic origin. All these things were there, as they had always been; but man, as we know him to-day, was not among them.

[115] Far out to sea, out of sight of the Arnhem Land mainland, was an island known as Bralgu (Bu'ralgu), the land of the Eternal Beings, which later became the home of the *dua* moiety dead. It lay to the south-east of Port Bradshaw, somewhere beyond Groote Eylandt.

It was here, at Bralgu, that the Djanggawul were living. They are said to have come from a big ceremony or meeting, in an unknown land far beyond the isle of Bralgu. On their arrival there they held another large ceremony, much larger than the contemporary *dua nara*, and used all their sacred objects. At that time they possessed a great many emblems, but only a few of these could be brought in the bark canoe to the Australian mainland.

They did not, however, spend very long at Bralgu, for it was only a 'half-way' resting place on the journey they were attempting. 113 831 There were three of them: Djanggawul himself, his elder Sister, Bildjiwuraroiju, and his younger Sister, Miralaidj. With them, too, was another man, named Bralbral. The Two Sisters and their Brother, however, were nearly always known as the Djanggawul. Djanggawul himself had an elongated penis, and each of the Two Sisters had a long clitoris; these were so long that they dragged upon the ground as they walked (see Sketch 1). The penis of Djanggawul, *gurlga* or *dulparu* (ordinary name for penis) had a long foreskin (*dabin*), suggesting that it had not been circumcised; at various intervals along the penis were notches, or penis 'rings or ridges', as on an ordinary penis towards the apex. These rings 773 831

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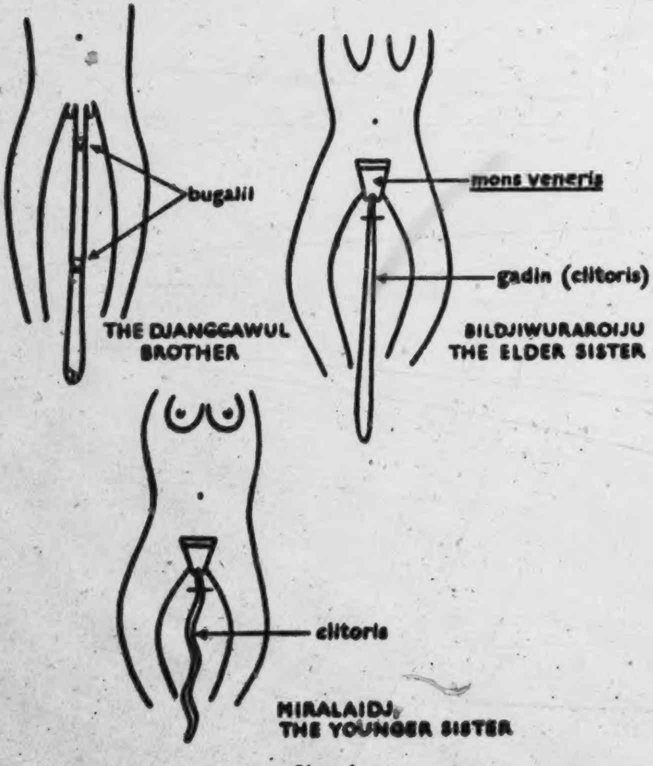
[1] The Yirrkalla version: this varies in certain points from the Milingimbi version, which will be presented later. *Vide Daughters of the Sun* (for publication).

THE DJANGGAWUL (from rough drawings by native informants)


bugalil
mons veneris
gadin (clitoris)
THE DJANGGAWUL BROTHER
BILDJIWURAROIJU THE ELDER SISTER
clitoris
MIRALAIDJ, THE YOUNGER SISTER

Sketch 1.

were called *bugalil*,[1] a term also applied to the sacred invocations at present used among the north-eastern Arnhem Land peoples (*dua* moiety, *bugali*, or *jiritja* moiety, *bugalili*). The elder Sister's clitoris (the ordinary term being *gadin*, and the 'inside' term *ngeribngerib*) was the longer, while the younger Sister's was almost snakelike in appearance.

[1] The secular name for the penis-ridge is *balbi* or *bapi*, 'snake'.

The Djanggawul Myth

•773 831 At Bralgu, as they walked around with these, they left grooves in the ground from their dragging. And when the Djanggawul Brother had coitus with his Sisters, he lifted aside their clitorises, entering them in the usual way. He was able to have incestuous relations with his Sisters, because at that time there were no marriage rules, no moieties, and no prohibitions. Djanggawul was the lawmaker. There is, however, no mention of Bralbral's having sexual relations with the Two Women. Djanggawul had been having coitus with Bildjiwuraroiju for a long time; her breasts had grown large and 'fallen down' with milk, and she had produced many children. Miralaidj, though, was quite young, having just passed puberty, and her breasts were rounded and firm.

[778] They lived at Bralgu for some little time, putting people there, and leaving 'Dreamings' in the form of totemic designs, sacred emblems and body painting. They also instituted their rituals and ceremonies. The Brother's penis and the Sister's clitorises were sacred emblems, like *rangga* poles.

773 At last they made ready their bark canoe, and loaded it with 'Dreamings', sacred drawings and emblems; the latter were kept in a conically-shaped *ngainmara* mat. When all this was ready they themselves, with their companion Bralbral, climbed into the canoe. Then they paddled out to sea,[1] leaving the island of Bralgu far behind. For days and days they paddled, until they sighted the Arnhem Land mainland. At last they came to it, landing near Rose River. But they soon left this part of the country, and continued paddling along the coast until they reached Jelangbara, Port Bradshaw.

[778] Near Gangudoi Island, while still in their canoe, the Ancestral Beings saw some trees,[2] in the branches of which were perched two *lindaridj* parakeet, drying themselves in the first rays of the sun. As they passed this island, the *djigai* morning pigeon was crying. 'Maybe that bird is crying out on the land,' said the Djanggawul, and so they sang about it. They saw, too, trepang on Bauwuling (or Bauwijara) Islands, and there were many *lindaridj* on Gagubam. A black cockatoo, immediately it caught sight of them, flew over to what are now the sacred sandhills near Ngadibaulwi (or Ngadibalji) rocks.

[778] As the Djanggawul were nearing Port Bradshaw, and while they were still paddling, they could see the white foam from waves breaking around the sacred rock of Gulbinboi, just outside the entrance to the bay. As they looked they saw, too, myriads of small

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[1] It is said that they came on the crest of a huge wave, but Part 1 of the Song Cycle seems to contradict this.

[2] There are no trees on this island now.

lindaridj parakeets flying over the mainland, the sun's rays catching 773
the redness of their breast feathers. There was a constant roar of waves pounding on the beach. They paddled farther into the bay, coming to the Garingan rock, and saw the wide curving beach of Jelangbara. They sang with joy, and allowed the surf to take their canoe into the shallow water.

Then they dragged their canoe on to the beach and unloaded it, making this a sacred place. Jelangbara is the largest Djanggawul [778]
centre in north-eastern Arnhem Land and, to-day, the most important.

Here the Djanggawul Brother wished to shorten his Sister's clitorises. But the elder Sister said, 'No, wait till we reach Arnhem Bay. We can have a good rest, and put Dreamings there.' So they walked around, still dragging the clitorises and elongated penis, leaving marks on the ground which may be seen to-day.

Leaving their canoe, the Djanggawul walked along the coast until they came to Ngadibalji, where they saw the *djawuldjawul* mangrove bird. Here too the Djanggawul Brother left his hairbelt, but retained the parakeet-feathered waist-band and arm-bands he was wearing. The hairbelt is now a long sandhill. On the sandhill, [823]
were track marks of the *damurmindjari* (*damburindari* or *waburunggu*) wild duck; these birds were eating the *murnji*, or wild peanut roots. On the opposite side was a large barren sandhill, on the surface of which were tracks of the *djanda* goanna, as well as of many birds. A *gamaru* tree with non-edible 'apple'-like nuts was growing there [778]
too. This tree is sacred; it is a *jirijiri* bullroarer tree,[1] and to-day only those who are very old may look upon it. Here the Djanggawul paused and heard again the cry of the *ngadili* (*dangadilji* or *rirambung*) black cockatoo. Here too is the sacred waterhole, *milngur*, which [778]
the Djanggawul made by inserting the *mauwulan rangga* pole: a spring flows from it down to the beach. It is said that the four Beings entered this hole, and made their camp within.

Later, they walked farther along, and saw two *djanda* goanna resting on the peak of a sandhill. 'Ah,' said the Brother, 'I am very surprised to see this goanna. I had better put it Dreaming (*wongar*) for this country.' *Bangguli* is the goannas' 'inside' sacred name. The goanna crawled up the smooth surface of the sandhill, dislodging the sand. It attempted to climb on to the sacred *djuda* pole (that is, tree) the Djanggawul had placed there, but could not do [824
so, because the Djanggawul were still there. To-day the *djuda* 778]
ironwood (or 'black' bark) tree is still there, at Mauwulanggalngu, where it grew from the sacred *rangga*.

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[1] The connexion with a bullroarer is not clear, for this object is not now used in the *dua nara* ceremonies, but only in the *kunapipi*. *Vide* R. Berndt, *Kunapipi*, Chapters III and IV. [534]

The Djanggawul Myth

•113 After leaving the sandhills the Djanggawul continued walking along. Near the beach at Gumararanggu (named from the *gamaru* tree there), still on the Port Bradshaw peninsula, they heard the noise made by the black *malgu* flying fox, and saw more sandhills and goannas, as well as *gunjan* beach worms.

Coming to Wabilinga Island, which was later to become a large Macassan settlement,[1] they saw the Baijini folk who were working there. They were cooking trepang, where the tamarind trees stand to-day. The Djanggawul were much perturbed and said to the Baijini, 'Baijini, you had better move from here to your own place; for this place must belong to us, and we are going to establish a sacred site.' So some of the Baijini moved to the other side of the island, and some went to Dagu (vagina or vulva) on the mainland. But they left behind them on the island ashes from their fires, the criss-cross elongated bars on which their trepang was left to dry, some huts, and a *djiru* trepang-stirring 'spoon' or ladle. Djanggawul picked this up and looked at it. 'Ah,' he said, 'this is a good colour. I shall have it for myself.' The *djiru* was black, a colour that the Djanggawul now used for the first time, together with blackness from the charcoal in the ashes of the Baijini fires. In this way, the locality became partly *dua*, from the Djanggawul, and partly *jiritja*, from the Baijini.

Another *jiritja* moiety Ancestral Being, named Laintjung, was also present at this site. He exchanged gifts with the Djanggawul, and in return for some red parakeet feathered string gave them some black clan patterns, and opossum fur string. That is why, to-day, each moiety has something belonging to the other: the *jiritja* took from the *dua*, and vice versa. Laintjung was also given a red parakeet feathered *jiridbald* waist-band and some *judumiri* arm-bands. He possessed, too, a piece of cloth[2] which he had obtained from the Baijini, but the Djanggawul refused to take any of this. The Djanggawul had apparently come prepared for this meeting with people of the *jiritja* moiety. They had half expected trouble from them when they requested the Baijini to move, and carried in readiness *gundmara* ('inside' name) fighting dilly bags.

Leaving Wabilinga Island behind them, the Djanggawul moved to Gagubam, where they heard the *djawuldjawul* mangrove bird

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[1] It was on this island that pottery was found a few years ago: *vide* R. and C. Berndt, Discovery of Pottery in North-Eastern Arnhem Land, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 1950, Vol. LXXVII, No. 11, pp. 133-8.

[2] That is, according to the great Baijini Song Cycle, cloth woven by the Baijini themselves on the Australian mainland on a primitive hand loom. *Vide* R. and C. Berndt, *Arnhem Land—Its History and Its People.*

calling out in the early morning. After this they heard 'people and 173
children' crying; and here spirit footprints of children may be seen
on the rocks. These are the spirits who are as yet unborn, and remain in the uterus of the elder Sister, Bildjiwuraroiju. After leaving Gagubam the Djanggawul passed Bauwuling (or Bauwijara) where they saw *bauwaldja* catfish swimming after small fish and *bunabi* trepang slugs. And above Bauwuling, in the fresh water well on dry land, surrounded by mangroves and salt water, was *biabia* refuse from the trepang.

After spending some time in the Port Bradshaw country, establishing sacred sites, they decided to walk down the beach towards Caledon Bay; but there were so many totemic folk in those parts that they again got into their canoe and paddled down to Gambuga-(wi) at Caledon Bay, in territory of the Karlpu linguistic group. There they are said to have made a sacred place, and put special *djuda*. These were *rangga* emblems which, with others, they had carried from Bralgu in the *ngainmara* mat, and trees sprang up as they were pushed into the ground.

When they had done this they looked up, and saw a big dry weather cloud or mirage, called *wulma*. It was coming from Buguwolumiri, in the country of the Djapu linguistic group, towards the 'bottom' (or southern part) of Blue Mud Bay; so they travelled towards that place, and put more dreamings there. Their clitorises and penis were still dragging on the ground.

Then they saw another *wulma* towards the 'top' of Blue Mud
Bay, at Bugalji, in Djarlwak linguistic group territory. They paddled
around the coast to that place, and left dreamings there. Then,
abandoning their canoe, they went on foot through the bush until
they came to Balimauwi; this is also in Djarlwak country, on the
northern side of Rose River. They made a big camp, building a
number of different 'shades' or huts, which to-day are paperbark [824]
trees; and there they also placed many dreamings.

Thus through the greater part of the country about Port Brad- 173
shaw, below Jelangbara almost to Rose River, all along the coast
and even a little way inland, the Djanggawul left special drawings 178
symbolically related to themselves and to totemic beings. They 794
left, too, sacred *rangga* emblems, such as the *djuda*, the *djanda* (goanna)
and *mauwulan* (associated with water springs), as well as sacred
baskets. At all those places, moreover, they established their cult,
with the singing of songs and the ritual of the *dua* moiety *nara*
ceremonies.

While at Balimauwi, they looked up into the north western sky 173
and saw a great *wulma* hanging over Ngaluwi ('inside' name
Waguralgu) at Arnhem Bay, in the territory of the Ngeimil and

113 Dadawi linguistic groups. The Djanggawul eventually reached this place and made a camp, putting many dreamings there. They made a fish trap and caught many fish to eat. They also put the wild banana palm, and Djanggawul with his *mauwulan rangga* poked holes in the ground from which water flowed.

After a time they left Ngaluwi, walking along until they reached Gulugboi(wi), where they made a big 'shade'. They pushed their *djuda* into the ground, and trees sprang forth; and they put the *banggada* plants there.

At Daramur (or Darar'woi), inland from Arnhem Bay, the Djanggawul saw a *djanda* goanna in a fresh-water swamp that was covered with wild banana *dara* leaves; this was in Ngeimil territory.

Farther on at Mingu well, also in Ngeimil country, a *djanda* emerged from an open well which contained partially submerged banana foliage: new shoots had come up, completely covering the surface of the water.

Passing on to Djaddjananggu (also Ngeimil), they found a swamp where they saw *warugai* or *marabinj* fish; here too they saw lily roots and foliage, with flowers, and many ducks. Close by was the Maijulwi billabong where the *dadam* lily, with its round edible bulbs, was growing in great profusion. The Djanggawul Brother
[118 himself declared part of Maijulwi sacred, so that to-day only two
562] tracks, one at each side, lead down to its banks; women may go down one of these only to get water, and must always return by the same road.

Continuing on, the Djanggawul reached Nganmaruwi, where they erected another large 'shade'. During all the time they had been on the Australian mainland, there is no mention of the Brother's having coitus with his Sisters; but while they were living here, he said to Bildjiwuraroiju, 'I want to copulate with you, Sister.'

But the elder Sister was shy. 'Why?' she asked him.

'I want to put a few people in this place,' the Brother replied.

So he lifted her clitoris, and inserted his long penis. He did the same with Miralaidj. So they continued living there, and he copulated as a husband does with his wives.

After some time, Bildjiwuraroiju became pregnant, and her Brother said to her, 'Sister, may I have a look at you?'

'What for?' she asked.

'Because I want to put some people in this place.'

'All right,' she replied. She opened her legs a little, resting her clitoris on her left leg. The Brother sat before his Sister and placed his index finger into her vagina, up to the first joint.[1] Then he

[1] Tip of finger, *darir*; from tip to first joint, *dariribulungun*.

pulled it away, and at the same time a baby boy came out. Bildjiwuraroiju was careful to open her legs only a little; if she had spread them out, children would have flowed from her, for she kept many people stored away in her uterus. These people (or children) in her uterus were like *rangga* emblems kept in the conical-shaped *ngainmara* mat, for the latter is a uterus symbol.

As the baby boy came out, the Brother stood listening to hear the sound of his cry. As soon as he heard this, he took hold of the child and put him on to the grass near by. Then he returned to his Sister, and saw a baby girl coming out. After she had cried, he lifted her gently and placed her under the *ngainmara* mat, which served to shelter her from the sun. The crying of a male child is *rirakai'dugung*, a forceful 'heavy' sound; while that of a girl is *rirakai njumulgunin*, a 'small sound'.

Then another male child issued from the elder Sister, and was put into the grass by the Brother. She continued giving birth to children of both sexes; when she had finished she closed her legs, and the Djanggawul Brother said to her:

'Sister, these little boys we will put in the grass, so that later, when they grow up, they will have whiskers; those whiskers are from the grass. We will always do that when we remove male children. And these little girls we have put under the *ngainmara* mat, hiding them there. That is because they must be smooth and soft and have no body hair, and because girls are really sacred. They must be kept under the *ngainmara*, just as the *rangga* emblems are kept. We will always do that when we remove female children.'

The Djanggawul then left this place. The children they had produced grew up and married, and were the progenitors of the present Aborigines of those parts. From this time, too, the Two Sisters remained always pregnant, from having coitus with their Brother.

They walked along Arnhem Bay until they reached a place named Gangangu. Here they saw red parakeets, and put a number of dreamings in the swamp: that is, they hid in its waters some sacred *rangga* and clan patterns. Then they went on until they came to Madi or Mugarei (in Ngeimil territory). Here they decided to make their home, and they put a lot of dreamings. Up to this time the three of them had slept separately, the Brother calling one of his Sisters over to his side when he wanted coitus.[1] At Madi, however, they decided to lie together, the Brother himself sleeping

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[1] No further mention is made of Bralbral; after his arrival on the mainland he seems to disappear from the story.

173 between the Two Sisters.[1] But the *djalngin* leech bit them repeatedly, as they waded in the waters of the billabong, and so they continued on to Wulmawi (Walmali or Wulma, meaning a cloud).[2] They lived there for a time, putting many dreamings, as well as a special dilly bag and *djuda* tree *rangga*. The Djanggawul Brother poked the ground with his *mauwulan rangga*, making one hole after another, and calling at each the sacred invocations, so that water came gushing forth.

'This well is for the Ngeimil,' he said, drawing his *mauwulan* from the ground, and letting the water flow.

'This well is for the Riradjingu, this one for the Djapu, this for the Dadawi, this for the Djambatpingu, this for the Djarwak, this for the Marangu, and this for the Marakulu.'[3] He left special dreamings too from Wulmawi to Mudumli, at Arnhem Bay in Ngeimil country. In this way, he put his *mauwulan rangga* into every well in that region.

When they reached Mudumli, the Brother and Sisters saw the *mudum*, a small fresh-water fish. The Brother wanted to sit down here,

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[1] In one version, it is said that more children are left at Madi, but not in the same way as described in the main myth. After they had lain together, the Sisters grew large in pregnancy: they went down to Madi pandanus swamp and put into the water their *ngainmara* mat (also said to be a dilly bag), from which came people.

Now these Sisters 'just dropped' (that is, gave birth to) all the people, and their Brother is here said to have been unaware of their actions 'for only women know'. Near the pandanus swamp is a large mud bank, which is the *ngainmara* they used; and since this was made from pandanus leaves, great numbers of these palms grow hereabouts.

This version too declares that it was Madi, and not Nganmaruwi (as in the above text), where the male and female children, after being removed from the *ngainmara* (uterus), were put for the first time in the grass and under the mat respectively. It is said too that the Sisters did not tell their Brother that they did this; 'they themselves only knew about it'. Thus when the Brother came to collect all the *rangga* and put them away in the *ngainmara* mat, he saw that there were many 'people' (also synonymous with the *rangga* emblems). He counted them, before putting them away, and as he did so, he said to himself, 'Ah, this is a man, this is a woman'. There are, therefore, male *rangga* (penis and foreskin *rangga*) and female *rangga* (*gungman*, a woman who has produced a child, and *wirlgul*, adolescent girl, *rangga*). Then the Brother put them back into the *ngainmara*, hiding the women from the men. Those he left behind were called Madjara, which means 'half the group', and those who were left in the mat (bag, or uterus) were Malei'arangu, while all of them together were Madjaramala'bunginbungin. In this way people were left from Blue Mud Bay to Milingimbi, and inland to the sacred billabong of Muruwul (of Wauwalak fame: *vide* R. Berndt, *Kunapipi*, Chapter III).

[2] Also in Ngeimil country, but affiliated with the Riradjingu linguistic group.

[3] *Vide* A. P. Elkin, R. and C. Berndt, *Art in Arnhem Land*, pp. 22–3, for clan and linguistic group terms and organization.

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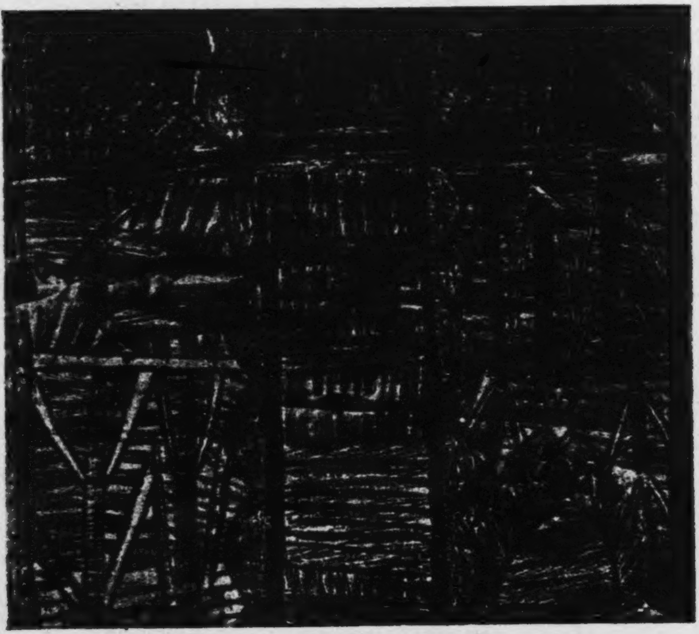
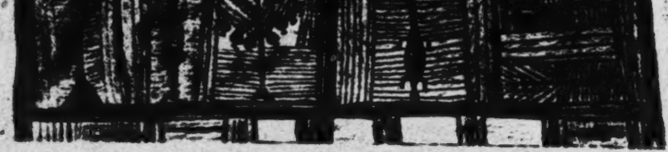


6. The Djanggawul Brother and younger Sister at Jelangbara.



7. Sacred *rangga* at Port Bradshaw.

[facing p. 33]

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but his Sisters protested that they didn't want to put people in this place.

'May we live here, Sisters?' asked the Brother.

'No,' they replied, 'You may only sing here. We are not going to put our people in this place.'

So they walked along until they reached Dalwirgauwi (in Ngeimil territory). This place takes its name from a water worm or leech (*gauwigauri*), and when they saw it, they sang about it. As they were singing, they looked up and saw a water goanna (*djalga*, 'inside' name; *wonggawa*, 'outside' name) perched on a tree near the billabong. They began to sing about it, and as they did so they killed it, roasting it over the coals. When it was cooked, they cut off its tail and head, and hid the verterbrae under the ground after removing the fat and meat. The hidden verterbrae became a *rangga*.

Leaving this place, they continued on to Woiwiwi (Wuwul or Wulwi), so named because of the tears shed by the Djanggawul; the trio had been walking for a long time, and the sun and the stinging sand had made their eyes smart until the tears ran. Here, too, the Djanggawul Brother persuaded his elder Sister to open her legs so that some children could be left. In much the same way as before, she opened her legs, resting her clitoris on her left leg, while her Brother inserted his index finger into her vagina so that it went up to a point between the first and second joints (this point is called *nabunga*). When he pulled out his finger, children of both sexes came forth; the boys were placed in the grass, and the girls under the cover of the *ngainmara*. These children grew up to become the progenitors of the Aborigines of this region, which was still Ngeimil territory. The Djanggawul also put four *djuda* there, and many dreamings. All these things they left for the children whom they had put there, so that when they grew up they and their descendants could look after them.

At all the places through which they passed, the Djanggawul Brother had had coitus with his Sisters, and the three had dragged their genitalia along the ground, while the Two Sisters continued to be pregnant.

They continued to Ngainmaruwi (or Ngainmaralji), so named because the Sisters had their *ngainmara* mats full of children—that is to say, their uteri were full. Here they saw wild duck tracks, wild peanuts and their foliage, and some *djanda* goanna; but the goanna were frightened on seeing the Djanggawul, and ran away. They made camp here. On one side they placed the *ngainmara* and on the other grass, and in between sat the Brother with his Two Sisters. He lifted Bildjiwuraroiju's clitoris, and again inserted his index finger up to the second joint (*bulungun*); as he pulled it out, 113 both girls and boys came forth one after the other. The girls he put on one side, under the *ngainmara* beside the Sister, and the boys on the other, among the grass, next to himself.

As Djanggawul was occupied in helping to remove the children, he heard a big noise in the distance. This was the sound of new spring water running. He spoke to the two women: 'Sisters, if you will look after our children, I shall go myself to look around and see the water, which should be coming up.'

Leaving his Sisters, he walked along the swamp called Ngudbarei (the 'inside' name of Ngainmaruwi), and he put all the dreamings into its waters for the Ngeimil people. When he had done this he returned to his Sisters, and spoke to the female children. 'I have put our things into that swamp,' he said. 'You must not go there, but when you grow up you can drink water down there away from that sacred place.'

They had all been living there for some time, when one day they saw a *wulma* spreading across the sky. Then the Djanggawul left their children and continued on their journey, walking along till they came to mangroves which belonged to the *jiritja* moiety. As they skirted these, they heard the noise made by a big river running towards the sea from the highlands.

'Look, Brother,' said Bildjiwuraroiju, 'We had better not go through that water (of the *jiritja* moiety); it is running too strongly.' She was referring to the Ngurumuruwoi river, in Dalwongu linguistic group territory.

They listened there, beside the mangroves, and heard the Baijini people talking. These Baijini were making a lot of noise, singing and playing, among their houses.

'Well, Sisters,' said the Djanggawul Brother, 'the Baijini are there. We had better go farther up the river.'

So they continued to Daranga-dabareigarei, which means 'running water from rain', and is in Djambatpingu territory. They went on until they reached Grogula, where the yellow snake had made its camp.

'Look, Sisters,' said the Brother, seeing the yellow snake at this place. 'Look, he blocks our track.' So they went round and past the snake. They had not gone far before they reached Brubari, the place of the Thunder Man, and saw him there; but the Djanggawul Brother said, 'We will leave that *dua* Thunder Man, and go on.' So they went past him too, and continued on their way.

They went on walking until they came to Milguli (named from the *milgu*, mangrove worm). Here two *jiritja wongar* people, belonging to the Kupapingu linguistic group, were collecting these worms.

The Djanggawul Myth

'Some one blocks our road again, Sisters,' said the Brother, 'these *jiritja wongar* man and woman.' They listened and heard them chopping wood, removing the worms. So they by-passed the two *wongar*, and continued on until they reached Damijagaiju, in Djambatpingu country, so named because the black *ngadili* cockatoo swooped down and alighted at this place.

When the Djanggawul heard the cry of this bird they were happy, and began to sing. And Bildjiwuraroiju said to her Brother, 'Perhaps we will live at this place. This is our place, and the cockatoo's cry makes us all happy, Brother.' Here too, there were edible *winigamu* roots (called 'jungle tucker'); so they collected these, and sang about them. In the branches of a tree they hung a special dilly bag; and they constructed two large shades, one for the Two Sisters and one for the Brother. The latter, using his *mauwulan rangga* pole, made many wells thereabouts, and he also put many *djuda* trees.

When this was done, the Djanggawul Brother said to his Sisters, 'That is enough for this country. We have to go on now.'

So they went on their way again, but camped only a short distance from Damijagaiju.

It was here that a *wongar* 'enemy' man, or sorcerer, surprised Miralaidj when she was walking by herself. He had come really to kill the Djanggawul Brother, but failing to see him concentrated on the younger Sister. This sorcerer made her unconscious through magic, then inserted *rigal* bones vertically into her body behind the collar-bone, cut her across the cheeks at each side of the mouth and pulled down her jaw. Finally, after copulating with her, he made cuts from the vulva upwards at each side, outlining the mons veneris and pulling the flesh up to bare the pelvic bone. He replaced the flesh, and put her jaw into position, and left her lying on the ground. Some time later she regained consciousness and returned to her Sister and Brother, but the next morning she died. That same day she was buried at Damijagaiju. They erected a post over her grave, and hung upon it two special dilly bags. The elder Sister and Brother were anxious to leave this country; and since they had no intention of returning, they did not place the dead Miralaidj on a platform for decomposition and eventual bone-collection.

Miralaidj, however, miraculously reappears in the story, and accompanies her Brother and Sister on their journey.

They had not gone far when they saw another *wulma* spreading across the sky. They walked towards it, and came to Ngulmamiriju (so named because of the *wulma* or *ngulma*). Here they heard a great many *jiritja wongar*—the fire from Caledon Bay, the 'sugarbag' bee, and so on. The Djanggawul, however, did not stop; they went on, hearing the *jiritja* bee which came from the Kupapingu and Lialaumiri territories. Passing through densely covered bush country, they eventually reached another Ngainmaruwi, in Djambatpingu country, on the western side of Arnhem Bay.[1]

Here the Djanggawul Brother inserted his *mauwulan* into the ground, and withdrawing it made a well. He made a camp, and put many dreamings; and he hung a sacred dilly bag in the branches of a tree. Here, too, he persuaded Bildjiwuraroiju and Miralaidj to give birth to a number of children, in much the same way as before. This time he put his index finger into their vaginae up to the knuckle (*dajalwajun-bulungun* or *deijalwadunju-bulungun*).

Then they left this place, and went on to Balgaimi, where the Djanggawul urinated. They were still dragging their clitorises and penis, and at last they reached Wobilangoii (which is named after Wobilinga Island in the mouth of Port Bradshaw harbour, on the eastern side of Arnhem Land). Here they sang, and put many children. This time the Djanggawul Brother put two fingers into his Sisters' vaginae, the index and middle fingers. He did this each time children were taken out, gradually putting in additional fingers until at last he was inserting his whole hand, and finally his whole arm.

At Wobilangoii the Djambatpingu shark blocked their road to the west, so that they had to make a bark canoe. They hid their sacred emblems within the *ngainmara* mat, and paddled out to sea.

At last they came into Milmindjalboi and drew up their canoe on to the beach. The Djanggawul disembarked, and put a *mauwulan* point into the ground to form a well; but as the water gushed forth the *jiritja* Ancestral Being Banaitja, son of the great Laintjung, came out too. The name of the place is derived from this incident. Since Banaitja was there, the Djanggawul just put some of their dreamings and continued on to Buangura, where they made camp.

Here they heard the *ngadili* black cockatoo crying out. 'Ah,' said the Djanggawul, 'this is the special bird for us. It looks as if we should camp here.' And they began to sing.

Then they heard the *Wurulbaralb* mangrove bird, so they sang about that too. When they had finished, the Djanggawul Brother took his *mauwulan* and poked it into the ground, but it sank right in ('diving right down'). He tried another place, with the same result. Then he walked to the summit of a hill and put it into the ground there; just below the surface it struck black rocks, but a little water gushed forth and ran down the hillside at Bunangura. Then he tried elsewhere, but the *mauwulan* did not go right down.

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[1] This place has the same name as the one mentioned before, and means the place of the *ngainmara* mat.

He returned to the camp, and put his index, second and third fingers into his Sisters' vaginae, removing a number of children, whom they left at this place.

Continuing their journey they reached Jagajawula, where the Djanggawul Brother inserted his *mauwulan* in a likely spot; but when he withdrew it, no water came out. Farther up he tried again, and again, with the same result. No water appeared.

'I don't know what we are going to do, Brother,' said the Sisters. 'We are growing thirsty, and no water comes out when we withdraw the *mauwulan*.'

They walked along until they came to Dunawi (so named because they put the *mauwulan* in there). Here they saw plenty of *waluwon* mangrove shells, and sang about them. Still they walked on, until they reached Galgidjboi (or Duwalgidjboi), where they saw geese, from which the place takes its name. Here, too, they saw the Thunder Man; but they sang only about the geese. The Djanggawul put two *djuda*, crossed together and standing up.

While they were walking along, the Brother and Sisters tripped over a *wulimu* 'grape' grass creeper, which became tangled about their feet. As they fell, the Brother accidentally pushed his *mauwulan* pole into the mud; and straight away a big sea came up and flooded this part of the country.

The Djanggawul talked together about this, 'What shall we do? We'd better go back the way we came, for we don't want to go through all this mud.' They turned back, and went along the river bank until they reached Daraweimirangu, so named because the Brother and Sisters took a fire-stick and tried to twirl it to make fire; but they did not succeed.

They left this place, then, and walked along the cliffs until they reached a river. Here the tide was very strong and the river was deep, because of the water which had risen when the Brother accidentally pushed in his *mauwulan*. They tried to cross, but when they could not do so they continued along the bank until they came to Djulngeijari. There they made posts and rails to form a large fish catchment; they saw many varieties of fish and crab, including the *bigun* grass crab, and they sang about these.

Near this place they were able to cross the river. They had not gone far, when they looked up and saw a spreading *wulma* rising from the mainland opposite Elcho Island, in Djambadpingu country. Going towards this, they eventually reached Maidjalngari, where they sang about some wild ducks they saw flying. Bildjiwuraroiju looked up and saw the *ngadili* bird, and sang about that too.

It was here that they made a big camp; and the Djanggawul

The Djanggawul Myth

113 Brother examined the clitorises of his Sisters, wanting to shorten them. But they would not allow him to do so. 'No,' they said, 'we will go farther on, for we must first fill up this country with people. It is a bit cold here, too; it is better that we should have warm country where we cut our long clitorises.' So they left Maidjalngari behind them and came to Gulibangaru, also in Djambatpingu country. There they saw and sang about the *gabila* mangrove 'nail' fish, from which the place takes its name.

They waded in the water among the mangrove roots, trying to catch these fish by blocking channels with their hands. The 'nails' of the fish pierced the Sisters' hands and opened them (*gonglaidjung*)[1] so that the blood ran. So they sang about the fish, and the running blood.

They left this place, and came to Mialbungara ('inside' name, [118] Marabai), where they put a number of sacred dilly bags: Marabai is one of the big sacred places of this region.[2]

'Look, Brother,' said the Sisters, 'I think we can leave these dilly bags in this shade; and we can put all the dreamings in here, because it is a big country.'

'Yes,' the Brother replied. 'I am pleased to hear that.'

So they hung up the dilly bags, first one belonging to the Riradjingu, then the Dadawi one in the middle, and the Djambatpingu one at the end. Then they camped in their sacred shade, and the Djanggawul Brother put his hand, up to a point (termed *malnguraga*) between the knuckles and the wrist, into the elder Sister's vagina. He withdrew a great number of children. A lot of people came out, men, women and children, and they were all crying; there were big groups of them. Then the Djanggawul made three shades, one for each of the three linguistic groups mentioned above, and an additional one for the Djarlwak. While they were living there, the elder Sister said one day to the younger, 'We had better put our dilly bags in this shade, and leave them here for a while.'

'What are we going to do?' asked the other. 'If we put them here, what then are we going to do?'

'Well,' replied the elder Sister, 'we can look around for mangrove shells.'

So they both left their camp to collect *mingaul* and *waluwon* shells.

While they were away, the Djanggawul Brother and his companions, men who had come out of the Sisters, but called the

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[1] Some versions say that the fish 'cut' the Sisters' hands, dividing the fingers and thumbs, whereas before the fingers of each hand had been joined together.

[2] The Two Sisters took from Madi to Marabai one woman, whose name is unknown Between Madi and Marabai are many wells, made by the *mauwulan* of the Djanggawul.

The Djanggawul Myth

Djanggawul ‘brother’ and ‘sisters’, were hiding in their big shade.[1] 773

In the myth, these are called the Djanggawul Brothers. The women who came out of the Sisters are assumed to have gone out foraging for food in another direction.

Meantime, the Two Sisters had collected a lot of shells. When they waded back to dry land, they heard the whistle of the *djunmal* bird (a black, green and yellow mangrove bird), warning them that something was wrong. At once they knew that something had happened to their dilly bags, which contained the sacred *rangga*.[2]

‘You know that *djunmal*, Sister,’ the younger Sister asked. ‘What is it crying for?’

‘That bird cries to let us know,’ answered the other. ‘Perhaps something has happened to our sacred dilly bags. Maybe the fire has burnt them. We had better go back and look.’

They left what they were doing, and ran back towards their shade. The dilly bags were gone, and on the ground about the shade were the tracks of the men who had stolen them.

[1] That is, the Djanggawul Brother had a shade or hut, similar to that used on the *dua nara* ground, although he himself ‘“made” no dreaming’. All ‘the beginning’ belonged to the women, the Two Sisters, and all the dreamings really belonged to them. The Djanggawul Brother and his ‘brothers’ sat down at their shade and made fire ready to cook their food, for at that time it was the men’s duty to collect all the food, and to prepare it for the women as well as for themselves.

In another version, we are told that the men and the Brother just sat there; for the Two Sisters and their ‘sisters’ (that is, women from their uteri) were holding a *mareiin* sacred *nara* ceremony, which was their ‘own business’, to which the men could not come. The women, however, were fairly close to the men, for it is said that the men ‘came over by themselves on top of the women’s tracks’, and entered their separate shade.

In their own sacred shade the women made fire, *rindjarei*, the sacred fire dreaming, for fire comes from the redness of the women’s vaginae. The twirling firestick in its groove is symbolic of coitus, because a man is warmed by lying between a woman’s legs just as he is by a fire, since a woman’s vulva is always ‘hot’. [831 372]

After their ceremony the women hung their fighting dilly bags, decorated with tasselled pendants of red parakeet feathers, on the limb of a tree, and went out to collect shell-fish. (Here the main text takes up the story.)

[2] The men sat listening in their shade; and when they heard no noise, no singing or dancing, they said to one another, ‘All right. It is no good that we are men. It is no good that women should have that sacred bag and all the dreamings, and we should have nothing. We’ll take over from those women.’ They all agreed, ‘Yes.’

So they came up to the women’s sacred shade and went inside; and there they found all the dreamings, all the *rangga* and clan patterns. They began to dance and sing the sacred songs which they had learnt by listening to the women, and which are still sung to-day in the *dua nara*. As they sang, they looked in the direction the women had taken, but saw no sign of them. Then they took down the sacred dilly bag of the women and danced with it.

The Djanggawul Myth

113 'Sister, look!' called the younger Sister. 'What are we going to do now? Where are our dilly bags?'

'We had better go down and ask the men,' said the other, 'it's nothing to do with them.'

They hurried off, down towards the men. As they came running, the Djanggawul Brother and his companions looked up from their shade and saw them.

'What shall we do?' thought the Brother. He picked up his *jugulung* singing sticks, and began to beat rhythmically upon them, while they all sang.

As soon as the Sisters heard the beat of the singing sticks, and the sound of the men's singing, they fell down and began to crawl along the ground.[1] They were too 'frightened' to go near that dreaming place, the shade of the Djanggawul Brother. They were fearful not of the men, but of the power of the sacred songs. The men had taken from them not only these songs, and the emblems, but also the power to perform sacred ritual, a power which had formerly belonged only to the Sisters. They had carried the emblems and dreamings in their *ngainmara*, which were really their uteri; and the men had had nothing.

The Two Sisters got up from the ground, and the younger one said to the elder, 'What are we going to do? All our dilly bags are gone, all the emblems, all our power for sacred ritual!'

But the other replied, 'I think we can leave that. Men can do it now, they can look after it. We can spend our time collecting bush foods for them, for it is not right that they should get that food as they have been doing. We know everything. We have really lost nothing, for we remember it all; and we can let them have that small part. For aren't we still sacred, even if we have lost the bags? Haven't we still our uteri?' And the younger Sister agreed with her.

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[1] In another version it is said that as the Two Sisters saw the men in the shade, and heard the clapping of their sticks with the rhythmic rise and fall of the song, they stopped running and said, 'They take place for us (that is, take our part). Shall we leave them alone?' asked the younger Sister. 'We'll have to take back that bag, because it does not belong to them.'

'If we do that, we'll have to go inside the shade,' replied the elder Sister. 'All right, we'll do that,' said the other.

They began to run again, towards the shade. But the men made a big noise, with their dancing and singing. This halted the Sisters. They bowed their heads and said to the men, 'Forgive us. Our "fathers" can now look after all those dreamings, perhaps better than we can.' (The women substitute the word 'Fathers' for 'Brothers'; it is used here as a term of respect.)

Then the Sisters turned back from their shade and hid in the bush, 'for it is not right that women should go towards the men's sacred place'. This is the beginning of the men's sacred ritual. 'Women should really be the Ceremonial Leaders, for everything belonged to them; but the men stole it all. But really we still know that they are the real leaders.'

It was the men, however, who introduced the drawing of sacred designs.

In this way, the Two Sisters left all their dreamings at that place. They put a lot of people there too, while the Djanggawul Brother and his companions sang songs and performed ritual of the *dua nara* ceremonies. The Sisters also made a very sacred well, so sacred that none but those with white hair may go near it. This is the sacred well of Marabai.

After a time, they and their Brother continued on their way[1] and eventually reached Baldangaru, named from the white liquid which poured from the vaginae of the Sisters. This liquid came from them because they had been putting out too many children in that country. They lived for a while at Baldangaru. One day they looked back towards the east, the direction from which they had come, and saw the sun's disc rising and its rays lighting up the country; and so they sang about it.

While they were there, the Djanggawul Brother was sitting with his Sisters, whose clitorises were resting on their legs. He looked at Miralaidj and saw her vulva, for her legs were slightly apart. He began to put his penis out, and gradually it became erect (*laldjumba*) like a sacred emblem pole; he bent forward and took hold of his Sister making ready to insert his penis. But the elder Sister spoke to him. 'No,' she said, 'you are not to do it yet, she is far too young.' (This contradicts previous statements that the Brother had been engaging in coitus with both his Sisters.) 'This is cold country, and you can't put it up properly (that is, erect penis); the hot country is much better. If you wait till we are farther up in the hot country, the skin will be different.' So instead of copulating, they put many dreamings there.

They walked further on to Djauwadad, so named because the Djanggawul slipped a little as they walked along. They were still dragging their elongated genitalia. At last they came through plain country to Dambala(nguru), the 'inside' name, or Greidjaru, the 'outside' name, meaning 'the cutting place of the clitorises and penis.'

Here they made a large shade, and the Djanggawul Brother spoke to the others. 'Sisters, I want to look at you both now, and see what you're like. This is a good place, and I'm going to cut you both.' First he lifted the clitoris of the elder Sister and cut it, leaving only a small clitoris which reached to her thigh. Then he turned to the younger Sister, and cut off her clitoris in the same way.

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[1] In one version it is said that they went to Muruwul, the sacred waterhole where the Julunggul Snake lives, and where the Wauwalak Sisters were swallowed; but this is not confirmed. *Vide Kunapipi*, Chapter III.

•113 'Ah,' said the Brother, 'Now you look more like proper women and it is easier for me to see the slit of your vulvae. Let me try them out.' First he copulated with the younger Sister. 'That feels nice,' he said. Then, turning to the elder Sister, he copulated with her too. 'That's very enjoyable,' he told her. 'I can feel the short end of the clitoris touching my penis, as I couldn't before.' The long clitorises the Brother had cut off were like *rangga* poles. He placed these in the sacred shade so that they could always be there for the people to use in generations to come. It is also said that from the cut clitorises, the Djanggawul made a special feathered string used to-day to decorate sacred *rangga*. When this was finished they hung it from the limb of a tree near the shade.

'Sisters,' said the Brother, 'I have made your clitorises shorter. We shall leave a great number of people here, for now that you have short clitorises we can make more people come out from you.'

(It is said in the myth that this is the first time Miralaidj brings people from her uterus; but previous references contradict this.)

The younger Sister opened her legs and a few people came out of her. There were not many, because she was said to be still small.

The elder Sister helped her, by letting out a few from her own uterus. The Djanggawul Brother himself had not yet cut his own elongated penis; he carried it now by swinging it over his shoulder, and wrapping it around his neck.

Leaving Dambala(nguru) the Djanggawul walked along until they heard the sound of running water. Coming nearer, they traced the sound to the waters of Waruwi, as they ran down towards the sea. Waruwi river belongs to the Kupapingu, Waramiri and Ritarngu linguistic groups of the *jiritja* moiety.

'Look,' said the Brother and Sisters, 'the *jiritja* waters block us. We shall walk fast and pass them.'

When they had gone past Waruwi, they heard the sound of the *jiritja* honey bee.

'Ah,' said the Sisters, 'another *jiritja* blocks us! What are we going to do now?' Then the Djanggawul Brother replied, 'I think we will just go past, and not bother about that.'

The continued walking till they heard a wild *boda* duck, who was dancing and singing there. The three Djanggawul began to sing too, and called the name of that place Bodangura (from the duck); this is in Djambatpingu territory.

At last they reached Manbui, which was named after the younger Sister. The Djanggawul stood considering his two Sisters, looking at their clitorises, which now extended to their thighs. 'I must cut them more,' he said. So he cut their clitorises, until each Sister had only a small piece left in her vulva, no longer than women have

to-day. From the ends that were cut off they made feathered string, 113
and hung it in a sacred shade.

The Djanggawul Brother opened Miralaidj's legs a little, and kneeling before her inserted his penis into her up to its first notch or 'ring' (see Fig. 1). Then he ejaculated, and as he withdrew his penis, people too emerged from the uterus. This was just like the Brother's poking his *mauwulan* into the ground, so that water gushed forth. However, not enough people came from her, so Bildjiwuraroiju helped her. Miralaidj was not yet big enough in the belly, and had insufficient children inside her to fulfil the needs of this country. Nevertheless, most of the people came from her, and only a small proportion from the elder Sister.

At last the Djanggawul reached Gwroidjura (meaning 'to hold and copulate with her'); the Brother grabbed his elder Sister and opened her legs, holding her as he inserted his penis so that half of it went into her vagina. Then he ejaculated, and as he withdrew it people came flowing out.

They continued on until they reached Walinjina, where the Djanggawul Brother poked his *mauwulan* into the ground making several wells. To-day, there are three ordinary waterholes, and [823]
four tabu-ed ones.

The three Djanggawul walked towards them and sat down, beginning to dig for the lily worm (*wida* or *gwoiida*), and singing about it.

Then they went on until they reached Maiilwi, where they heard the big *dua* flying fox. The Brother turned to his Sisters, 'You two Sisters, you can wait for me,' he said. 'I am going down to see what's there.' He walked away from them, to a place where he saw all these flying foxes hanging in a special tree. Then he returned to the Sisters. 'I saw a lot of flying foxes there, Sisters,' he said. 'What shall we do, leave them?'

'Let us just sing about them,' replied the Sisters.

But the Brother asked, 'Do you think we can get them all, kill them?'

'No,' insisted the elder Sister, 'we don't want to get them.' She turned to Miralaidj. 'What do you think, young Sister?'

'No,' agreed Miralaidj. 'We will leave them, because they are our own special flying fox.'

'All right,' answered their Brother, 'we shall leave this place.'

They went on, and as they approached Dambojowoi they heard the sound of water (from which the place takes its name). When they reached there they saw Buralindjingu, a very old dreaming man of the Maidjara linguistic group. He was sitting down meditating, but looked up and turned round when he heard the footsteps of the Djanggawul. 'Well, you three,' he said, 'you two women

713 and one man, you'll have to drink at that outside waterhole, and not at this special water where I am; for it is sacred.' Saying this, Buralindjingu took up his *jugulung* singing-sticks, and began to sing. The song and the rhythm were quite different from those used by the Djanggawul: but Buralindjingu was not pleased with it. Turning again to the Brother, he said, 'I'm not much good at singing, *gudara* (son's son). You had better take the singing-sticks.'

So the Djanggawul Brother took the singing-sticks and he and his Sisters began to sing about their journey by canoe from Bralgu, their landing at Jelangbara, and their subsequent adventures right up to their meeting with Buralindjingu. They went on singing their 'travelling story' all night, until the dawn came; and Buralindjingu listened with pleasure to their tale.

The Djanggawul Brother sang also for those two *dalibingu* or *galibingu* (young novices for circumcision, but in this case the Two Sisters). They painted the Two Sisters with sacred clan designs, and smeared red ochre over their bodies; they were *galibingu*, like novices who have their foreskins cut, for they had had their clitorises shortened. So the singing continued until the sun was in the middle of the sky. Then Buralindjingu gave cycad palm nut 'bread' to the Djanggawul, and they ate it sacramentally before continuing their journey.

At last they came to Galiwinggo Island (Elcho Island), where the Sisters produced more people. Camping at Ba'rarabu, the Brother put a number of dreamings, which belong to different *dua* groups.

At Nguruninana (or Wuruninana), near where the Elcho Island mission garden is to-day, they tried to make their home. But *jiritja* spring waters came bubbling up and forced them to leave this place, although the Djanggawul had left *dua* drawings and dreamings there.[1] The red ochre dreaming was the most important: the Djanggawul had brought this from Bralgu, and were forced to leave some at that spring. They then went farther along the Island

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[1] It is said that the spring waters, which were on *dua* territory, moved to the *jiritja* side and gave the Djanggawul no alternative but to leave.

This *jiritja* water had travelled from the southern shores of Blue Mud Bay to Duwalaba at Arnhem Bay, and then went underground, until at Nguruninana it came gushing out into the Djanggawul's camp. When it reached the Djanggawul, the *jiritja* water said, 'Give me more room! The *jiritja* dreaming told me to come up to you,' (that is, Laintjung had told it to come).

But the Djanggawul replied, 'We'll just put our dreaming in here for the *dua* side, and then we'll go.'

This *jiritja* water dreaming also went through from Grindall Bay north of Blue Mud Bay and northwards through the Bush; it just 'looked' at the second big river (unnamed) in western Arnhem Bay, and then continued to Elcho where the Djanggawul met it. From there it went down a creek to Howard Island and on to Milingimbi, where it came out at Macassar Well.

and left deposits of red ochre[1] at Warnggawoi and Gulmanbi spring. 773

Before the Djanggawul left Nguruninana, two novices were circumcised, a *mora* and a *gurlmu*. These two boys[2] were sitting in 773 a big shade undergoing the circumcisional rites. When cut in the 304 camp they were called *gamajudi*, and then, on being taken out to their seclusion shade, they were called *galibingu*. This was the first time circumcision had been carried out in that region. Afterwards it became a general practice, because the Djanggawul had 'made it a big dreaming.'[3] But the Djanggawul Brother himself was never 'cut' or circumcised in this way: he only shortened his penis. He is said to have circumcised the young boys 'because he didn't want the youths' penes to grow long like his'. He made this law for the new generation only, 'a new law for new people.' And he spoke to them, saying, 'It doesn't matter for myself, but it must be a new law for all my new people, all those I have put in this country.'[4]

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[1] This red ochre is called *murunggun*, from which the local linguistic group takes its name. The Djanggawul are said to have spoken here: 'We leave this red ochre, so that all the people may get it from us.' Red ochre is symbolic of the afterbirth blood shed by the Two Sisters, or is a 'condensation' of the sun's redness, as symbolized in the red chest feathers of the *lindaridj* parakeets. Today red ochre from Elcho Island is traded far inland, and all along the coast. [823 438]

[2] Also termed *muralai* or *mulalai*. The old term used to describe this stage was *galibingu* or *galinguru*: the novices are called by this term, or *galamunja* (referring to their penes), while undergoing the rites, and cannot use their real names. The real names of these two were, however, Nganangu and Bralbral, both of the *dua* moiety. The latter is said not to be the same as the Bralbral who accompanied the Djanggawul from Bralgu. These two novices went back and forth from the general camp to their sacred shade. (Among the north-eastern Arnhem Landers there is not the strict seclusion of circumcision novices found in most other parts of Australia.)

[3] In another version it is said that a son of the Djanggawul, a *marigu* flying fox, was circumcised at Blue Mud Bay; his foreskin was kept and waxed into a feathered string pendant attached to a sacred dilly bag, as is the practice to-day. The reason given for the circumcision is that the Djanggawul Brother discovered that his children (those removed from the Two Sisters) were sleeping together, and indulging in incestuous relations with one another (as the Djanggawul themselves were in the habit of doing). At first he did not realize what they were doing, but one day he found them copulating together. Then he 'changed his mind' and cut (circumcised) the penes of the young boys (his sons), 'because they had slept with their sisters: that was their punishment'.

[4] Informants remark, 'He had been going on in the old way until that time, just like those people at Goulburn Islands, and the Gunwinggu, and others of western Arnhem Land. All those people haven't adopted the new law. If the Djanggawul Brother put it at those places, the people there have missed the law—but we, the north-eastern and north-central people, did not miss his law.'

Another version states that the Djanggawul started circumcision 'because he was pushed out by new people' (in the dreaming concept of *jiritja*, spring water).

The Djanggawul Myth

173 Before they left Nguruninana, the Djanggawul Brother awakened one early morning to see the sun rising.[1] He called to his Sisters; they all sat up, feeling its warmth. The sun's heat caressed his shoulders, and turning around the Brother saw it rising from Djalwalauwa,[2] or as it is also called, Djanggawul, on the Wessel Islands. As he looked, he sang. The Djanggawul then went over to the Wessels, and at Jalarula are the Brother's knee marks.[3]

When the *jiritja* spring water caused the Djanggawul to move, they crossed the strait to the top of Howard Island, and looked around for a place in which to build their camp.

Then they went on to Dariwi, where the *jalbin* wild honey was; but they did not stop here, for the Djanggawul said, 'Something blocks our way.' They walked along to Galguwiri, where they made camp, erecting a large shade; and the Brother, using his *mauwulan*, made a number of special wells. They also went to the top of Galguwiri, where the Brother made another well, and put his hand, up to the wrist, into the vagina of the young Sister. When he withdrew it he listened, and heard the children coming out. The little boys came first, and these he threw into the grass. Then he listened again, and heard a little girl crying; he pulled her out, and placed her under the *ngainmara*. Other girls, too, came out from the young Sister.

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[1] It is said in this version that this was the first time the sun rose. However, there are many references to the sun before this, and the reader must bear in mind the connexion between the sun and the Djanggawul.

[2] The place of the Djanggawul is the sun's place. As the Djanggawul looked to the east, in the direction of the rising sun, they thought of their home at Bralgu.

At Djalwalauwa the sun left its mark on the ground; this place is also said to be the 'home' of the red *lindaridj* parakeet, which belonged to the two 'daughters of the Sun'.

Walu, the Sun, had two daughters named Barinangu (counterparts of the Djanggawul Sisters). Originally they accompanied their Mother across the sky so that there were three suns; but their Mother said to them, 'You will have to go back to the Spirit Country of Bralgu, because it's no good for us all to go this way; it would be too hot for the people.' So they went back to Bralgu, and later came with the Djanggawul Brother to the Australian mainland.

But another inconsistency appears. The Mother speaks as if there were people already on the mainland, before the visit of her two daughters. One version tells that while the Djanggawul Brother and his Two Sisters were on Elcho Island there were three suns in the sky (that is, the Mother Sun and her two daughters), and that is why the Djanggawul got very hot; and it was then that the Mother Sun sent her two daughters to Bralgu, so that only one sun remained.

According to Warner (*op. cit.*, p. 537) the Sun woman is the wife of the Moon.

A 'play' or secular story (*wagal dau*) of north-central and north-eastern Arnhem Land declares that the Sun woman, who has one daughter, carries with her across the sky the sacred *mauwulan* and *ganinjari* sticks, and feathered string from the *lindaridj* parakeet (who calls her 'mother').

[3] There is little evidence relating to the Djanggawuls' visit to the Wessel Islands. Several versions insist that they did not go there, and that the places there are associated with them 'only through the song side'. The various groups on the Wessels always came to the mainland to celebrate the *dua nara* Djanggawul rituals.

When the Djanggawul Brother placed his hand into his Sisters, he used his right hand and arm (*dunabangu*) for Miralaidj, and his left hand and arm (*wilgurdei* or *djalbudei*) for Bildjiwuraroiju.

The three walked on until they came to Barangal (where the yellow snake was), and there they heard the *dalba* snake. 'Something blocks us here,' the Two Sisters said to their Brother. 'We will go past.'

They went on to Ngaladjalg (or Ngaladjeigan-djeiginli) which is on an open bay east of Milingimbi, in country of the 'light' Djambatpingu language group. Finally they reached Djiriliwuramaiju (or Djiriliwiriju), known by the 'inside' names of Maluwa or Magulmaguli. There they made a big shade, and sat down to dig for *rugai* roots.

While the Two Sisters were sitting in the waters of the billabong collecting these roots, their legs were apart and the water entered their vaginae. With the water came leeches. As soon as this happened the Sisters got up, and felt the leeches and the water inside their uteri. While they stood with their legs apart, out rushed the water, the leeches, and some children. The water and leeches had made them too heavy, and that is why the people came out too. So a great number of people were put here; and at the same time, the Djanggawul sang.

Coming on to Jalwuljalwul they made camp, the Two Sisters constructing their shade at one place and the Brother making his a little distance away. Later on he came down to where his Sisters were, and saw a child issuing from Miralaidj. He cut its umbilical cord, saying, 'This is my boy; he must go into the grass.' And he tossed it among the coarse undergrowth. Every day he visited the Sisters, and watched them bringing forth children. Each time a boy came out he put it into the grass; but the girls he deposited carefully in a clean soft place, hiding them under the *ngainmara*.

At every place they went to, the Djanggawul Sisters brought out children who grew to adulthood; and in this way the Djanggawul Brother was able to name all the various linguistic groups and clans.[1]

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[1] There are some inconsistencies in respect of this. On the one hand, according to the mythological text, all the clans and linguistic groups had a common origin, all having the Djanggawul for their parents. On the other hand, it is said that these clans and linguistic groups were of the *dua* moiety, while other Ancestral Beings, such as Laintjung and Banaitja, originated the *jiritja* moiety linguistic groups and clans. Only the *dua* clans and groups, however, are mentioned; and in order to propagate,

•713 Leaving Jalwuljalwul[1] the Djanggawul continued on their way to Balmargi, in the country of the Wulagi people, on the mainland opposite Milingimbi. Here they put many dreamings and a number of people; and they left in the mangroves the *lindaridj* feathered strings, which are now parakeets. The Brother shortened his long penis, and with the piece that was cut off he made a *rangga* emblem.

This completes the myth in so far as the Yirrkalla people are concerned.[2]

When the Djanggawul Beings first landed at Jelangbara they spoke Riradjingu; then, when they went to a Karlpu place, they spoke Karlpu; at Bulmawi they spoke Djarwak; when they reached the eastern shores of Arnhem Bay they spoke Ngeimil, then, as they journeyed on, Dadawi, until they reached the western side of the Bay when they spoke Djambatpingu, as they did also at Elcho Island. At Djiriliwuramaiju they spoke Guruguru. That is, they usually spoke in the dialect of the linguistic groups through whose country they passed, and it is implied that they left these dialects for the people who were removed from the Sisters' uteri.

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the original members of these (the children of the Djanggawul) would of necessity be obliged to carry out incestuous relations. Earlier we read (that is, Footnote 3, p. 45) that the Djanggawul Brother punished his son (or sons), by circumcising them, because they slept with their sisters. Aborigines rationalize by saying that although the Djanggawul children were the first human beings to be placed on the mainland, and from them the *dua* clans and groups were formed, other *jiritja* people were not long in coming, and were placed there by the *jiritja* Ancestral Beings. Some informants, however, prefer the theory that all people, both *dua* and *jiritja*, sprang from a common source, the uteri of the Two Sisters.

[1] This marks the termination of the north-eastern and north-central cultural bloc.

[2] Other versions take the myth farther into western Arnhem Land, and as far as the Goulburn Islands. It is said that at the latter place the Djanggawul gave birth to more people, and that there attempted to circumcise two novices. They made a big shade and danced, as at Elcho Island, but after being circumcised the two youths died. Then the Brother said 'Leave them. If you cut those of the new generation here, they will die.' That is why these people do not practise the rite of circumcision.

Chapter Three

THE CONTENT OF THE MYTH

This myth is further extended and elaborated on its arrival 773 in the Milingimbi region; but since we are considering only the Yirrkalla version, the former will be retained for later study.

Professor Lloyd Warner's version of the Djanggawul myth[1] 773 does not conform either to the Yirrkalla or to the Milingimbi version, as recorded in song and in linguistic text from a wide 114 range of informants. It does, however, more closely approximate the latter, for there, as in Warner's version, only Two Sisters are mentioned and not the Djanggawul Brother. Apparently most of the beginning of the Djanggawul myth was unknown to Warner's informants, for their important journey from Bralgu and landing at Port Bradshaw are omitted altogether.

However, we shall treat first the points which bear some similarity to those mentioned in Warner's version. It is stated that 'our grandfathers came out from the wombs of these women',[2] by 'grandfathers' the natives meaning their original ancestors: but the significance of this remark is not noticed, and the theme of perpetual pregnancy is not treated. The section which relates how the Djanggawul Sisters lost their sacred emblems agrees in most major points, and in this way Warner's version helps to stress the important place held originally by the women, that is, their possession of all the sacred objects and of the power to perform all sacred ritual. This aspect is of fundamental importance when we consider the basic theme of the Djanggawul myth.

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[1] L. Warner, *A Black Civilization*, pp. 336–40.

[2] L. Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 337

The Content of the Myth

113 114 The statement that the Two Sisters 'hit themselves on each buttock so they could make plenty of people and their vaginae would grow larger'[1] is quite different from what was mentioned in the Yirrkalla version. The point that their vaginae were small, and not large enough for sexual intercourse, is not found in the above myth. Warner mentions[2] that before their coming there was no land at all, and that they were responsible for making all the islands on the northern coast of Arnhem Land. This again does not conform. Nor does the section relating the incestuous 'rape' of the younger Djanggawul Sister; during the writer's recent work at Milingimbi, Aboriginal informants knew nothing of this. In the Milingimbi version, however, a certain amount of attention is paid to the stone *rangga* which was lodged in the vagina of the younger Sister.[3]

A most important point does appear in Warner's version, where he states that the Two Sisters, when they first came, carried the sun. 'They were the leaders of the sun'; it was just as though it belonged to them. 'In the beginning we had the sun, the water and those Two Women—nothing more.' The sun was first.[4] A close association is inferred here between the Djanggawul Sisters and the Sun (or suns)[5]; and this becomes clearer in the Milingimbi version which we shall present later. The fact that the two daughters of the Sun Woman may be the Two Djanggawul Sisters is further borne out by the sun's association with the red breast feathers of the *lindaridj* parakeets in which is symbolized the redness of the sun. Moreover, the sun's full disc at midday is termed *dagu*, *ganbai*, or *dala*, vagina or vulva, and it is from the vulvae of the Sisters that the sun's rays come (*vide* Milingimbi version of the Djanggawul).

113 831 The dominating feature of the Yirrkalla myth is fertility, the fact that the Djanggawul were responsible for producing the original ancestors of the present Aboriginal people of Arnhem Land. This was their main function; but in treating it the myth offers a great deal of symbolism, in the way of mats, baskets and *rangga* poles, and emblems of male and female organs of generation. All the objects which the Djanggawul brought with them from Bralgu possessed life-giving qualities: the *ngainmara*, the eternally full uterus from which the people came; the *mauwulan*, which when plunged into the ground caused water to flow; and the *djuda* poles, from which grew flourishing trees. Associated with all these *dua* moiety emblems were strings of *lindaridj* breast feathers, symbolizing

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[1] L. Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 337.

[2] L. Warner, *op. cit.*, pp. 336, 338 and 340.

[3] L. Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 339.

[4] L. Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 340.

[5] *Vide* Footnote 2, p. 46; see also L. Warner, *op cit.*, p. 337.

the warmth of the sun, which made it possible for all things to live 773
and grow. 831

Apart from the significance of the myth as a whole, there are several interesting features. Throughout this version the incestuous relations of the Djanggawul Brother with his Sisters are acknowledged, and repeatedly mentioned. It is said that when the Djanggawul roamed Arnhem Land, there was no marriage system. The Djanggawul themselves possessed no moieties; it was only later, when their adventures became a matter of mythology, that they were classified as belonging to the *dua* moiety. Informants point out that the Djanggawul made their own laws, and are acknowledged as law-givers. It was through their incestuous intercourse that the Two Sisters were able to produce human beings, to populate the country through which they passed. Even at that early period, the importance of sexual intercourse in relation to pregnancy must 842 have been realized, for the part the male plays in this activity is heavily stressed: the emphasis is such that it cannot be a mere projection of present-day knowledge.

Later in their travels, however, when the Djanggawul arrived at Blue Mud Bay and also at Elcho Island,[1] the Brother seems to have altered his attitude towards incest, and to have 'punished' his sons, by circumcision, for having coitus with their sisters.

It was, nevertheless, the Djanggawul themselves, answerable to 773 no one, who determined their own law, and continued to cohabit together. The present marriage rules of local Aborigines are said to have been instituted by the Djanggawul; apart from sacred ritual, they created and gave to their people the complete structure of their social organization, with its associated culture. Some Aborigines, however, while acknowledging the primary importance of the Djanggawul, hold that other Ancestral Beings and Spirits were responsible for instituting certain features. Other religious cults have indeed come into being, among them the important Laintjung-Banaitja constellation. The Djanggawul, however, are considered responsible for establishing the fundamental pattern of this Aboriginal society.

To-day, when that society and culture are taken for granted by 773 its members, the major importance of the Djanggawul lies in their sacred ritual and in their doctrine, which, regarded superficially, 182 comprises merely the outline of their travels around the Arnhem 778 Land coast. Underlying that story, however, is a vast wealth of 796 symbolism and allusion, which will become more apparent after we have presented the great song cycle. It is this symbolism which is expressed in sacred ritual to-day, finding expression in song and

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[1] *Vide* Footnote 5, p. 45.

● 173 dance, and in the *rangga* emblems and sacred baskets. The *rangga*
poles, although modern in manufacture and decoration, are still
182 the 'same' as those used by the Djanggawul, and contain the very
178 spirit that possessed them in that mythological time: they retain
196 the sacred aura of the Djanggawul.

173 There is no explanation in the myth for the elongated penis and clitorises of the Djanggawul,[1] except that this special feature makes them unique among Ancestral Beings and Spirits of this area. When they had been cut, the severed fragments were treated as *rangga*, or as feathered pendant strings. Some informants insist that the original *rangga* mentioned in the myth were actually the genitalia of the Djanggawul.

Another interesting point raised in the myth is that the Sisters,
173 when having their clitorises cut by their Brother,[2] were treated as
304 circumcisional novices. Immediately afterwards followed the circumcision ceremony at Elcho Island, said to be instituted by the Djanggawul Brother himself. To-day, however, no circumcision ceremony is associated with the *dua nara* rituals; this feature is relegated to the *djunggawon* and *mandiela*, sponsored by the Wauwalak mythology.[3] The *dua nara* is not age-grading as the myth suggests; but since these rituals appear to be more purely indigenous than, for example, the Wauwalak ceremonies, it is possible that they were originally designed for this purpose. In the course of time the initiatory elements have disappeared from the ritual, but remain in the myth; and to-day the ceremony is revelatory in function.

173 Some inconsistencies appear in the myth, but this is not unusual in mythology which has been handed down through the generations by word of mouth. It is something which must be considered: we must allow for differences in theme, for a variety of versions, and for a considerable range in interpretation. Mythology presented verbally in story or song, no matter how conventional the structure of the society, shows a certain amount of flexibility, since the only means of presenting, and thus of preserving it, must be the individual members of that society. The narrator of a story may stress some particular aspect, elaborating it perhaps to the detriment of others. This process, gradual as it is, has cumulative effects; when, as apparently here, it has been continuing for centuries, we may suppose that the myth, for example the Djanggawul, has altered considerably from its original form. This must be taken into account in our analysis of the myth, and in our interpretation of its meaning.

The fact that the Aborigines pay so much attention to tradition may serve to minimize the number and extent of such alterations 173 and deviation, as found in their mythology. On the other hand, especially on the north-eastern coast of Arnhem Land, these people have been subjected in varying degrees to the infiltration of new ideas.[1] Their society, or for that matter their culture, has not remained static through the ages, while they were experiencing 177 various forms of alien contact. Without elaborating on the subject here, however, it seems safe to say that, whatever the extent of past alien contact in Arnhem Land, the majority of these Aborigines appear to have retained, as far as we can tell, the fundamental elements of their traditional outlook. Even if the Djanggawul saga has been considerably altered from its original, we have now no means of discovering what that original was like. We must, then, be satisfied with what knowledgeable Aborigines tell us to-day, learning their interpretations, and the apparent intent of contemporary *nara* rituals.

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[1] *Vide* R. Berndt, *Kunapipi*, Chapters I *c* and IV.

[2] The symbolic significance of these has been treated in the Song Cycle.

[3] *Vide* R. Berndt, *op. cit.*, Chapters I *c* and IV.

The original theme of the Djanggawul was possibly similar in many points to its modern counterpart, for the basic theme of fertility is heavily emphasized, and constantly expressed in symbolism: and symbols to these people provide the material basis upon which they have elaborated their religious thought and ritual.

We shall return to this point in a later chapter. At present we are concerned with inconsistencies; and a possible explanation for these may be found in the fact that tradition, orally transmitted, is not static, but is inevitably dependent on individual variability.

The most obvious inconsistency arises from the statement, at 173 the beginning of the myth, that before the arrival of the Djanggawul in Arnhem Land there 'were only land and sky, animals and birds, foliage and trees . . . and beings of totemic origin.' The Djanggawul, we are told, were responsible for the creation of human beings as we know them to-day. Throughout the myth, however, mention is made of other people, as well as Spirits, with no indication of their having sprung from the Djanggawul. It seems then, that, in addition to totemic beings, there were others who came into contact with the Djanggawul. Aborigines say that before the Djanggawul came there were only 'bird people in the land'; the latter may be taken to mean 'totemic beings' of animal, bird, reptile, fish or vegetable origin. Again, although these natural species 173 were present, the Djanggawul are said to have 'made them *wongar*,' 178 or 'dreaming'. 'Dreaming' is totemic in the sense of being specially

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[1] *Vide* R. and C. Berndt, *Arnhem Land—Its History and Its People*; and also R. and C. Berndt, 'Secular Figures of North-Eastern Arnhem Land,' *American Anthropologist*, 1949, Vol. 51, No. 2, pp. 213–22, with plates.

113 possessed of an aura, or spiritual substance, which has been directly
obtained in 'the beginning' (that is, in the mythological era) from
118 the Creative Beings (for example, the Djanggawul). The concept of *wongar*, then, rests on the fact that a particular natural species came into association with an Ancestral Being, and was declared sacred by that Being: it became incorporated in the mythology related to that Being, and through this divine connexion became totemic. This process seems to account for the majority of such *wongar*. For example, the Wauwalak tried to cook some animals and vegetables in their fire, at the sacred billabong of Muruwul; but these sprang from the ashes and rushed away, diving into the waters of Muruwul and becoming *mareiin*, sacred, as well as *wongar*.[1] When the Djanggawul reached Arnhem Land, however, they found that some *wongar*, mostly belonging to the *jiritja* moiety, had preceded them. The concept of *wongar*, of course, is not confined to the natural species; it includes all natural phenomena and physiographic features, as well as human beings, in most cases Spirits who through divine association have become *wongar*.

Now the Djanggawul, of super-human ability, making their own laws, creating their own pattern of behaviour, and possessing the power of giving life, were in no sense *wongar*, although the term *wongar* is used loosely in referring to them. They were not in any way totemic, and this is an important distinction. Totemism is merely incidental to them; it is a philosophy embedded in the traditional religion, and not a religion itself. Totemism seems to be an instrument wielded by these Beings to express focal points in their religious ideology, and used extensively to provide symbolic representations.

113 The Djanggawul, on arrival at Port Bradshaw, were thrown into immediate association with the *jiritja* Beings, Laintjung and the Baijini.[2] Laintjung is the *jiritja* male counterpart of the Djanggawul; he, with his son Banaitja and certain associated females, is often said to have been responsible for bringing into being the ancestors of the *jiritja* moiety people. This aspect has never been treated in such detail in the *jiritja* scheme of creation as it has in the *dua*; nevertheless, Laintjung himself was not totemic, but was creative in the same sense that the Djanggawul Brother was. Laintjung, then, is legitimately contemporaneous with the Djanggawul; but

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[1] *Vide* R. Berndt, *Kunapipi*, Chapter III.

[2] *Vide* R. and C. Berndt, 'Sacred Figures of Ancestral Beings of Arnhem Land', *Oceania*, Vol. XVIII, No. 4, pp. 309–26, plates and figures; 'Secular Figures of North-Eastern Arnhem Land', *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 51, No. 2, pp. 213–22; A. P. Elkin, R. and C. Berndt, *Art in Arnhem Land*, pp. 28–31; and R. Berndt, *Kunapipi*, Chapter I c, as well as *Arnhem Land—Its History and Its People*.

this does not apply to the Baijini, who are said also to have been 773
present on the Djanggawul's arrival.

The Baijini, although partially mythological are, rather, historical; 773
for they are said to have been the pre-Macassans, primarily traders
and aliens to the coast, and not in any way creative as were the 178
Djanggawul. They are, however, treated in the myth as if contemporary
with these Ancestral Beings. This inconsistency, which does 182
not conform to other data relating to the Baijini, seems to be a
projection of the historical into the mythological past, and for this
the necessity for oral transmission, with its reliance on individual
narrators, must be held partly responsible. Although an interesting
feature, and one which illustrates the flexibility of traditional
mythology handed on in this way, contrary material shows that it
must be regarded as an introduced element. This being so, one may
wonder how many other elements, not apparent to the anthropologist,
have been incorporated through the centuries. Alien
words or concepts, of course, may be found in many traditional
songs and stories, and are not especially apparent in the great
Djanggawul cycle. The inclusion of the Baijini, and for that matter
of Laintjung, is quite logical from the Aboriginal point of view.
It widens the sacred perspective of the *dua*, bringing it, so to speak,
up to date; for their religion is a living faith, the scope of which
must be broad enough to include all facets of the contemporary
situation. Moreover, it serves to explain why the *dua* may use black
charcoal when painting their sacred clan designs, and why the
jiritja may use certain *dua* possessions, such as red feathered string
from the *lindaridj* parakeet. In this way it correlates *dua* and *jiritja*
belief; and it gives sacred sanction to the *dua* for their use of black
colouring, an important consideration from a ritual point of view.

There is another inconsistency, too. We are told that the Djanggawul 773
are creative, and thus 'super-human': they are, virtually,
Goddesses and a God; and yet they behave in very much the same 776
way that human beings do to-day. They are, that is, made in the 182
image of man; but they are not answerable to man. When they behave
in a super-human way—in their creative feats, in the miraculous
reappearance of the younger Sister after being killed by sorcery,
in their possession of elongated clitorises and penis—they are projections
of human wishes and ideals, possessed of qualities which
these Aborigines find particularly attractive or important. Such
projection, however, may take place only at a subconscious level;
the repressed desire for incestuous relations, for example, severely
prohibited in everyday life, finds an outlet in mythology. The
Djanggawul Sisters represent an ideal of Arnhem Land womanhood
—ever bountiful, ever fertile: for this aspect is paramount in the

773 society of north-eastern and north-central Arnhem Land, which
776 places considerable stress on female fertility among both human
182 beings and natural species.

On the whole, however, the Djanggawul are very much like ordinary mortals. They depend on natural resources for food and sustenance; they must walk in order to traverse the country, and use canoes to cross the sea and rivers; they enjoy the satisfaction of coitus, the warmth of the sun and of fire; they sing and perform ritual. Moreover, their super-human powers do not seem to avail them when forced to alter their direction because of a *jiritja* moiety dreaming, or to move their camp, as in the case of the *jiritja* spring water at Elcho Island; or in the case of sorcery, as when Miralaidj was killed. The myth, then, deals with Beings whose behaviour, although they are super-human, approximates that of ordinary man. The myth is correlated with a way of life that the Aborigines know and appreciate, and consequently has a greater hold on their emotions; it involves a faith of which the adherents include all members of the society. The sacred aura of the Djanggawul extends over man, woman and child, bringing them all within the sphere of its religious expression, as manifested in the songs and the ritual.

Another feature is the segregation of the sexes when, in the myth,
773 female children are placed under the *ngainmara* mat, and male
182 children in the coarse grass. This reflects the Aborigine's assumption
that man's rôle in life is rough, his activities are more strenuous
562 than those of women, he takes the initiative in fighting, and altogether carries out the heavier work. His skin too is coarser, from
[826] his original exposure by the Djanggawul, while the contact with grass resulted in his growing facial hair. Women, on the other hand, were handled with greater care, protected from the harsh glare of the sun, from the rough ground and the grass. Because of this initial treatment, they are supposed to-day to be soft and yielding, with no facial and the minimum of body hair; and they are not, in theory, expected to carry out strenuous work. In reality, however, they are not the demure and submissive creatures idealized in this section of the myth. When the occasion demands, they can undertake equally difficult and strenuous activities, and possibly have greater endurance than men over a period. Nevertheless, the myth implies that they should in some measure conserve their strength to expend in sexual intercourse and childbearing. This twofold distinction between the sexes, on both physical and psychological grounds, is fundamental in local thought, with important effects on expected and actual behaviour. It is most interesting that we should find it expressed, in these terms, in a myth which purports to offer explanations of basic drives in Aboriginal society.

The Content of the Myth

The rôle of women in sacred ritual receives attention in that 773
section of the myth which describes their losing to the men the 562
sacred dilly bags and *rangga* emblems. This has considerable bearing
on the concept of what is rightly sacred and what profane; the theory 182
that women are profane because they do not take an active part in
many religious ceremonies has been the subject of much discussion.[1] 778
Although it is not the place here to discuss the question in any
detail, a few points are worthy of notice.[2]

The north-eastern and north-central Arnhem Landers' conception of sacred life, as mentioned, encompasses all members of the society, irrespective of sex. The 'aura' of religion, as they know it, permeates all cultural institutions, from the most simple or mundane to the most complex. According to the Djanggawul ideology woman, in the shape of the Two Djanggawul Sisters, was the source of all religious ritual, a fact which becomes apparent after studying the symbolism of the songs. At the same time, man's complementary part must not be underestimated. It might be suggested that because to-day the myth and associated ritual, with the songs, are now largely in the possession of men, the peculiar reproductive function of females has been more strongly stressed. It is reasonable to suspect, also, that if the Djanggawul had not lost their bag and *rangga* emblems, so that all ritual had remained in the hands of women while men continued to play a subordinate part, the emphasis would have been on the procreative abilities of the male sex.[3]

It is possible to conjecture that, by and large, members of one sex would be more intensely interested in the procreative and sexual function of the opposite sex than in their own. Whether or not the stress on female fertility was an 'original' manifestation,

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[1] *Vide* B. Spencer and F. J. Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, 1938, p. 464; P. Kaberry, *Aboriginal Women, Sacred and Profane*, 1939; C. H. Berndt, *Women's Changing Ceremonies in Northern Australia*, L'Homme, Cahiers d'Ethnologie, de Géographie et de Linguistique, I, Paris, 1950.

Émile Durkheim, in *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, 1926, acknowledged that women's part in Aboriginal sacred life was greater than his direct references would imply (p. 138, footnote 6).

[2] *Vide* A. P. Elkin, R. and C. Berndt, *Art in Arnhem Land*, 1950, pp. 28–33, and R. Berndt, *Kunapipi*, Chapters I *c*, III and IV.

[3] *Vide* M. Mead, *Male and Female*, London, 1950, pp. 102–3, in respect of some New Guinea tribes. 'The basic theme of the initiatory cult . . . is that women, by virtue of their ability to make children, hold the secrets of life. Men's rôle is uncertain undefined . . . man has hit upon a method of compensating himself for his basic inferiority . . . Behind the cult lies the myth that in some way all of this (ritual behaviour) was stolen from the women . . . men owe their manhood to a theft . . .' This is a particularly interesting thesis, which would repay further detailed attention.

773 as the myth would tend to explain, it is now almost impossible to
562 tell. We can say, however, that on the authority of the myth, the
182 ritual and the songs, together with certain emphases and attitudes
778 current in contemporary Arnhem Land society, it does seem that the source of this religion may be found in female fertility. At the same time the peculiar function of the male, in the sexual act and in procreation, is treated in much symbolic detail. Summing up the relevant treatment of male and female in the Yirrkalla version of the Djanggawul myth, we arrive at the conclusion that both played an equally important part. In the Milingimbi version of the same myth, however, woman's part is stressed to such an extent that the Djanggawul Brother makes no appearance at all in the story.[1]

In the myth the Djanggawul Brother and his companions brazenly stole the bags and *rangga* from the Sisters, offering no compensation in return. Their separate rôles were then automatically reversed, so that women instead of men were obliged to collect food. The crux of the situation, however, is apparent from the remarks made by the Sisters immediately after their ritual exclusion. 'We know everything. We have really lost nothing, for we remember it all, and we can let them have that small part. For aren't we still sacred, even if we have lost the bags? Haven't we still our uteri?' This is still the attitude of the women.[2] Woman herself is still sacred—not merely her procreative organs, her menstrual and afterbirth blood,[3] but herself as a member of the female sex. She did not contest the action of the Djanggawul men because her rôle in society is conventionally one of submissiveness, arising from her treatment when removed from the Djanggawul Sisters' uteri.

However, the whole problem of respective male and female sacredness is too complex for the cursory attention which is all it can receive here. To examine it in detail, from the point of view of north-eastern and north-central Arnhem Land society, would necessitate the presentation of the Wauwalak Song Cycle, an examination of *kunapipi*, *ngurlmag* and *djunggawon* rituals,[4] and a

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[1] Milingimbi version to be presented later. *Vide*, for example, L. Warner, *op. cit.* pp. 336–40.

[2] My wife's work among Yirrkalla and Milingimbi women bears out this statement. Their knowledge of sacred ritual is far more extensive than we have been led to believe, while their active participation is far from insignificant. The same holds good for certain other areas, for example, western Arnhem Land and Central-Western Northern Territory. See C. H. Berndt, *Women's Changing Ceremonies in Northern Australia*, *op. cit.*, 1950.

[3] There is a cultural stress on these features in Arnhem Land society. See *Kunapipi*, Chapter III.

[4] This has been treated briefly in *Kunapipi*, especially Chapter III.

discussion of contemporary behaviour and attitudes. Nevertheless, 773
it is one of the most important issues raised in the myth, and fundamental 562
in our conception of Arnhem Land religion. By admitting 182
the place of women in ritual life, we extend the function of religion 778
so that it is not solely, or even partially, the prerogative of man.
Each sex has its definite and traditionally defined rôle; and by accepting
this premise we realize the potential greatness of a faith
which has meaning for all the members of the society.

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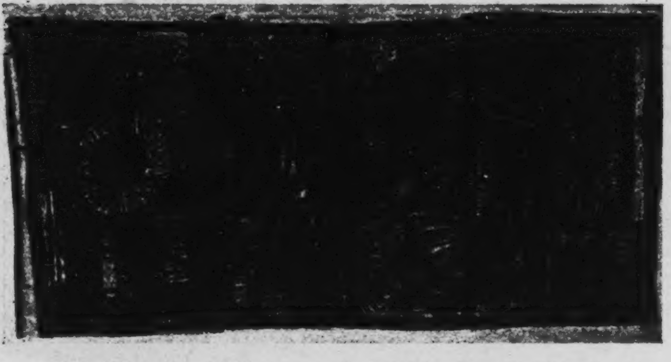

11. The Djanggawul Beings on arrival at Jelangbara, holding *rangga* emblems.

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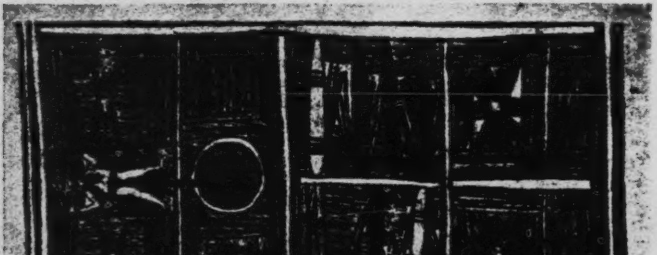
12. A ceremonial leader (Manimbar) represents the Djanggawul Brother as he tastes water on arriving at Port Bradshaw.

[p. 92(A)]

23. The Djanggawul Beings: the Brother removes *rangga* folk from his Sisters.



24. Scenes from the Djanggawul Cycle: the Sisters; Miralaidj in childbirth; sacred emblems, etc.

[p. 92(G)]

Chapter Twenty-five

EPILOGUE

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113 WE are now in a position to summarize and discuss the contents of the Djanggawul epic, as described in the Yirrkalla version. To facilitate this, a chapter of detailed comments has been added to each part, or group of songs. These separate chapters have reviewed briefly the significance and symbolic intent of each song; they have indicated, too, the various threads running through all the parts, and their interrelated themes. We have thus already glimpsed the cycle as an integrated whole, and noted the fundamental elements which have emerged. It remains, now, for us to draw broad conclusions on this basis. Final conclusions must, however, rest on our analysis of the Milingimbi version of this same cycle. That version is complementary to the one reviewed here, and although its basic themes are similar, and its fundamental intent is the same, it does contain a number of additional features. These differences, insignificant as they may seem, must be taken into account in making our final summary of the Djanggawul cult in north-central and north-eastern Arnhem Land.

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533 Reading through the mythology and songs of the Djanggawul cult, we can perhaps begin to appreciate something of the care and thought which have gone into their construction, in the form in which we see them to-day. Through them it is possible for aliens such as ourselves to understand in some degree the fundamental issues involved in one Aboriginal religious cult. Moreover, it is only through the medium of such material, particularly in the form of interlinear translations, that we may attain more than a superficial understanding of Aboriginal thought and behaviour. These

songs express what may be described as the spiritual quality of 182
this particular Aboriginal society. They are essentially traditional, 773
and have developed within the society as the result of group rather
than of conscious or acknowledged individual effort. The individual 533
is thus subordinated to the social conscience, in that he becomes the
instrument through which they are transmitted, and through
which they continue to live. The fact that he may add something to
them in the course of transmission is not, here, a significant factor
in this process: for if their inherent 'power', or their sacred aura,
is to remain, they must retain what is felt to be their original structure
in recognizable form. In this lies their essential value as documents
of social thought and religious belief. Being predominantly
traditional, they stem from the past; and because the concept of
the 'Eternal Dreaming' is a living reality in Aboriginal life, these
songs continue to retain at least the main ingredients (or what
people themselves regard as the main ingredients) of their original
content. Moreover, their oral transmission has been associated with
special rhythms and ritual postures, and with accompanying dances,
providing means of expression for the sacred thought and emotion
not merely of one but indeed of many generations of Aborigines.

The Djanggawul songs and mythology comprise a body of 773
knowledge which is not restricted, in the sense of being available
to only one section of the community, but is shared by all adults 533
and (to a much lesser extent) children. For practical purposes, a 562
distinction is made between, on the one hand, the executive 184
authority wielded by the men, and on the other, the more submissive 778
participation of the women. Women know the content
and rhythms of the songs, but 'officially' they are not supposed to
know the ritual or the sacred invocations, or to see the *rangga*
emblems. Generally speaking, however, they do know more about
these than would be suspected from conversations with men alone.
A number of women have described to my wife, in confidence,
various features of the rituals performed exclusively and 'secretly'
by men. They have described the *rangga* emblems, and told her many
of the sacred terms used in invoking. An explanation of this lies
in the Aborigines' concept of sacredness, which is not restricted
to the confines of the ceremonial ground. It is, on the contrary,
widely diffused throughout the society, and appears to permeate
every institution and activity of the people. Women, as we have 773
seen, by virtue of their childbearing ability as symbolized by the 533
womb, possess a special sacred quality peculiar to themselves, in 562
which men may not share. However important man may be— 778
and the indispensable part he plays in conception receives much
attention in the Djanggawul epic—woman has the more spectacular

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Epilogue

562 rôle, and the miracle of childbirth is hers alone. Upon that simple
778 but fundamental thesis much of this traditional epic is based.

Woman's participation in the *dua nara* is thus both logical and necessary. Each sex, however, has its own part to play; and the Djanggawul cycle has indicated not only the physical but also the culturally defined ritual differences between men and women.

In this volume, when describing the beliefs and practices associated
794 with the Djanggawul cycle and the performance of *nara* ritual, we
796 have purposely employed the term cult. This does not mean,
however, that it is controlled or shared by a select group, the
184 acceptance of members within the order being determined by
totemic, clan or linguistic group affinities, by status, prestige or
economic position. This is not so. The Djanggawul cult is one of
a number existing contemporaneously in this region, each having
its own mythology and associated ceremonies. All these cults are
in some degree interrelated, and all male members of the society
are eligible as active participants. Boys and young men pass automatically
through the age-grading ceremonies of the *djunggawon*,
kunapipi and *ngurlmag*. In addition to these, there are certain revelatory
rituals, which are not initiatory. The extent of a man's active
794 participation in the latter, and his eligibility for leadership, depend
796 upon several factors—for example, on his moiety and kinship
affiliations, and on whether or not the cult's mythology and ritual
554 belong to his particular linguistic group or clan, and to his father's
184 family. Such factors, however, never operate to debar him altogether,
and in many cases his relationship to the cult through his mother's
616 family may have a compensatory effect. The same conditions apply
in the case of the major religious cults, the *dua* and *jiritja* moiety
nara. All men may be accepted as initiands to the *nara* ceremonies,
and all may subsequently become neophytes; but the measure of
their active participation and leadership depends on the factors
mentioned above. Only a *dua* moiety man, belonging to the most
powerful *dua* linguistic group and clan, can rise to ceremonial
headmanship in the *dua nara*; and here, too, the principle of descent
may operate. The writer's main informants in recording and discussing
the Djanggawul songs, mythology and so on were *dua*
headmen, assisted by other men who were correspondingly 'graded'
in the ritual sphere.

533 Comparison of the myth (Chapter 2) with the Songs reveals certain
773 inconsistencies. These may perhaps stem from the fact that the
myth is an over-all sketch of the Djanggawul's journey and adventures;
it allows rather more latitude and scope to individual narrators,
and does not purport to describe various incidents in any great
detail. On the whole, it does agree basically with the Songs; but

whereas the latter terminate abruptly at Arnhem Bay, the myth 533 draws to its anticipated conclusion somewhere beyond Milingimbi. 113 Presentation of the Milingimbi version will throw some light on this question of the myth in its relation to the songs: for, as mentioned earlier, it not only repeats much of what has been set out here, but continues on to the Balbanara district, on the mainland south-west of Milingimbi. Even so, some of the place names mentioned in the myth are omitted from the Songs, and some of the incidents said to have taken place are not correlated. For example, we are told in the myth that the Sisters' clitorises were first cut at Dambala(nguru), whereas in the Songs this is done at Marabai. The two places are, however, close together; the most important point is that in both instances the cutting occurs after the Sisters have lost their sacred basket and *rangga*. Several other details, such as the piercing of the Sisters' hands by the *gabila* mangrove 'nail' fish, are not treated in the Songs; the latter incident, however, took place when the *rangga* fish traps were being erected (Part Four), so that this seems to be a matter of omission rather than of contradiction. Other features, like the *jiritja* moiety water blocking the Djanggawul at Waruwi, the flying foxes at Maiilwi, the meeting with Buralindjingu, and the Djanggawul's sojourn on Galiwinggo Island, are contained in the Milingimbi version. In the Songs, no mention is made of the killing of Miralaidj by sorcery, and of her miraculous reappearance; possibly this was not a traditional element, and was inserted without sacred sanction.

Where actual discrepancies are found between myth and Songs, it is difficult to find a satisfactory explanation. It is perhaps reasonable to suggest, as above, that the traditional songs are less subject to apparent alteration, while the myth depends on individual telling without the operation of the same social controls, and the story-teller is not bound to adhere rigidly to the main theme. Nevertheless, the myth provides a 'setting' for the Songs, and helps us to glimpse the whole in perspective even if not in considerable detail; on the other hand, it does not reveal the symbolic significance of the cycle in the same clear fashion as the Songs.

The Songs are presented here in the way in which they are sung 533 The original sequence, word order, and structure are retained 128 (except that when sung rapidly there is some slurring and abbreviation of words, not manifested in slower singing). The only thing lacking is the accompanying music; for they are, as mentioned, sung in conjunction with ritual and dancing. When the anthropologist has knowledgeable and competent informants, is acquainted with the language and with the ritual, and records the words as they are sung, the margin of possible error is considerably

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533 minimized. Moreover, the constant repetition, which serves to
128 impress on listeners the main features of the Songs, has a similar
effect upon the singers themselves. An important device where
transmission is entirely oral, with no visual aids except the sacred
objects employed in the rituals, it also helps to ensure that the
essential outline of the Songs is handed on from one generation to
another. With the myth, however, it is rather a different matter.
173 The myth is never narrated consecutively as a story, and there is
128 no accompanying check of song and ritual. It is told in fragments,
so to speak, to explain certain physiographical features, elements of
social behaviour, or ritual activities; or brief extracts from it may be
cited in the course of relevant discussion. The myth as related in
this volume is composite, and represents a synthesis of several
versions.

In some points, the myth as told by women does not conform
173 to that told by men. Essentially, however, all the versions are in
562 agreement. Women, too, stress the long penis of the Brother and
clitorises of the Sisters; the stealing of the basket and *rangga*, and
leadership of the *nara* rituals; the association with the sun and with
the *lindaridj* parakeet; and the sacredness of menstrual and afterbirth blood. They are inclined to emphasize the powers of the
Two Sisters at the expense of the Brother, and to credit them with
creating and leaving the most important animal and vegetable
foods for the benefit of the Aborigines who were to follow them.
The important childbearing rôle of the Djanggawul Sisters, setting
the pattern which women follow to-day, is said to have been
introduced by themselves. Before this, among the spirit people
inhabiting the land, women would select babies from the many to
be found sitting among the foliage of the cycad palms, and take
them back to camp to be breast-fed by the men. Women, it is said
(with a certain amount of rationalization), were too busy with sacred
ritual to attend to the bearing and rearing of children. The
Djanggawul, however, started the practice of child-bearing as it
is now known, and were the True Mothers of the Aboriginal race
in this region.

531 Let us turn now to a review of the Song Cycle as it is presented
here.

533 In Part One the Djanggawul leave Bralgu, the island of Spirits, to
which they had come from somewhere farther across the sea. The Songs
emphasize the fact that this was the place from which they voyaged to
the Australian mainland. The Morning Star, too, was sent from Bralgu,
and from there rose the sun, the influence of which is felt throughout
the cycle: for, as mentioned in Chapters 1 to 3, the Djanggawul Sisters

796 simply religious. Women too have their part – and a vital one – to play in the ritual life.

773 In eastern Arnhem Land, the most important of all rituals relate to the Djanggawul, a Brother and two Sisters and their companion who in the mythological era came across the sea from an unidentified country far to the north-east. On their journey (so the long song-cycle relates) they stayed for a time at an island called Bralgu, later the home of the *dua* moiety dead, located somewhere beyond Groote Eylandt. Then, on the shining path first of the Morning Star and presently of the rising Sun, they travelled in their bark canoe to land at Port Bradshaw on the Arnhem Land coast. With them they brought their special sacred objects. The Djanggawul Brother had long painted and feathered poles, of phallic significance. Some he plunged into the ground so that water gushed forth; and others, when planted, sprang into living trees. These life-giving sticks were kept hidden for much of the time in a plaited conical mat, a symbolic uterus.

As they travelled, the Sisters gave birth to many people (symbolised, again, by the sacred poles). These were the ancestors of the present-day Aborigines, for before the Djanggawul came there were only spirit beings in Arnhem Land.

At first, we are told, the Sisters alone possessed all the sacred objects, the rituals and songs, which they had brought with them from their distant homeland: the symbols they used, and their actions in dancing, centred about the important cycle of sexual intercourse, pregnancy, and birth. The Djanggawul Brother and his companion had nothing. One day therefore, while the women were out collecting shellfish, the men stole the sacred objects and took them back to their own camp, and there they began the special dancing and singing. But the Sisters, when they discovered their loss, did not protest very strongly. Now, they agreed, the men could attend to the rituals on their behalf, doing most of the "work", while they themselves devoted more time to raising their families (in the way of Fertility Mothers).

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796 This division still holds in the eastern Arnhem Land today, where women play a less active rôle in sacred ritual than do their menfolk. Today, too, replicas of their sacred objects are treated reverently and surrounded with ritual and symbolism. The long

poles, painted with conventional designs and hung with vividly- 778
feathered strings, are stored in a special hut on the sacred dancing 796
ground. From this hut, the uterus, men emerge with them to
posture and dance, while women also dance in the main camp:
and the ceremonies of this cycle conclude with an elaborate
bathing ritual in which both men and women take part.

The Djanggawul rituals belong to the *dua* moiety. People of 796
the *jiritja* moiety have some share in them through their mothers 616
and mothers' brothers; but they have their own ceremonies and
beliefs as well. Laindjung, a counterpart to the Djanggawul but 173
much less important, also came out of the sea to the Arnhem
Land coast from somewhere away to the east, and through his 177
son Banaidja established his mythology and rituals. Many such
Ancestral or Spirit Beings are said to have reached the north
coast of Australia by sea (see Chapter 5), and perhaps beliefs
of this sort reflect some early experiences of alien contact, or
some incidents which served as focal points for the diffusion of
alien ideas. In western Arnhem Land, too, mythology reveals a
strong alien orientation—although this feature may have been
superimposed in later years as a result of Indonesian intrusion.
Thus the great mother Waramurunggoindju and her husband
Wuraggag (now the landmark Tor Rock), like Jurawadpad and
most of their contemporaries, landed at various places on the
Coburg Peninsula after travelling from some far island identified,
today, as "Macassar".

Nevertheless, there has been inland influence as well. The 796
Djanggawul *nara* ceremonies, shorn of much of their mytho- 177
logical significance, have spread right across to the borders of
Western Arnhem Land. The two Wauwalak Sisters came over-
land from the south to the northern Arnhem Land coast, where
they inspired the three age-grading ceremonies: the *djunggawon*,
associated with circumcision, and known but not performed in
western Arnhem Land (where most of the tribes are non-circum-
cising); the *kunapipi*, more recently introduced into eastern
Arnhem Land; and the *ngurlmag*, rarely performed today, with
its probable origin the *ubar* hollow-log initiation rituals of west-
ern Arnhem Land. The Kunapipi has been introduced into

commenced perhaps some hundreds of years ago, when these 177
travellers of the sea expanded their field to include the North Australian coast. They came in search of trade, of trepang (bêche de mer), tortoise-shell, pearl-shell, sandalwood and timber.

But even before this, so these Aborigines tell in the songs that 173
record and preserve their traditions, the "Baijini" people visited their shores. These Baijini, or pre-Macassans, also came from the western islands beyond the Arafura and Timor Seas; and the Aborigines still sing today of the ships in which these people [538]
arrived, and the women who came with them; the stone dwellings they built on the Australian mainland; the cloth that they wove and dyed; the clothes they wore, and the way in which they speared fish and cultivated small gardens. They are said to have been paler than the Macassans, a golden brown or copper colour like certain flying foxes. The Baijini era is looked upon, [173]
now, as belonging to the far-distant past – a part, almost, of the Ancestral Dreaming period, when the great Spirit Beings walked the earth. In some stories the Baijini are said to have been contemporaries of the most important among the Ancestral Beings, the Djanggawul Brother and Sisters.

The Aborigines distinguish this period from what they regard as historic times, when the Indonesians came sailing to the coast in their praus. They arrived with the north-west monsoons in October or November, staying for at least six months of the year and returning home again with the south-east winds. Occasionally some of them remained behind with their ships all through the dry winter, to be on hand when the fleets arrived at the beginning of the wet season.[1]

We cannot be certain of the approximate period when this 172
Indonesian contact commenced, but tentative calculations place it in the early sixteenth century. Numerous camp sites, archaeological remains, old graves and tamarind trees testify to a prolonged association. Some of the large Macassan settlements have left concrete evidence behind them. In the north-eastern corner, for instance, quantities of pottery fragments have been found on an island at the mouth of Port Bradshaw and along the adjacent mainland.

461 based on the activities of adults, there is no idleness. Even the young men are engaged fully in hunting and fishing activities and work hard, in marked contrast with the conditions in similar groups close to white settlement, where the organisation is breaking down. Neither men nor women are idle for long, and even in camp as they sit around their fires they may be seen to pick up a basket, a fish net, a spear or other weapon, and work at this as they talk, just as they did when they halted at midday to rest and to cook food. Yet there is no feeling of haste, but rather of method, of system and order.

182
461 What are the drives, the incentives, which lie behind
all this organisation? Why does it move so smoothly, and what induces these people to work hard, so willingly, without any *apparent* direction, control or authority?

182
461 First and foremost, the organisation is based on the
773 traditions laid down by the totemic ancestors and handed
down in mythology, in the culture myths which the natives
believe to be a history of their own clan ancestors. This pro-
vides a charter for all their activities, it gives them a plan,
a motive, for their lives, which they believe are a recapi-
tulation of the lives of the clan ancestors, who "showed the
[861] way". Each individual is born into this pattern and learns
as a child the part he has to play as a unit in the family and
182 clan. But it is not all impersonal, for as a clan member he
461 fits into the kinship network, in which, although his
602 relationship to all the people in his own and neighbouring
554 clans is laid down when he is born, and his behaviour and
obligations to these people clearly defined, these acquire
a reality, a vital significance, because they are personal and
deal with real people. No member of a well-organised society
would willingly lag behind in his obligations. On the faith-
ful discharge of these, on his ability to hunt, to bring his con-

427 sionally, when men were short, they helped to make up the
648 crews of canoes which operated as tenders from the praus
in diving for trepang.

177 Today the word *mälli*, with this idea of "payment", is
192 used principally in connection with the manufacture of
437 wooden dugout canoes, and these form part of the culture
501 complex that was left as a legacy by the Indonesian visitors,
773 a fact which is stressed in mythology.[26]

431 A glance at the various types of transactions listed above,
437 in which property, or *gerri*, changes hands, and in which the natives' own terms and classification have been used, brings out the fact that in all but one the social or ceremonial aspect rather than the hard material or "commercial", the strictly economic, is stressed, and that in only one is the idea of direct *payment* or recompense, paramount. [463] This is in the manufacture of the wooden dugout canoe, *lippa lippa*, which, as will be seen in section 4, is the work of special craftsmen. Apart from receiving it as a gift, there are two principal ways of obtaining a canoe. The first is by employing a craftsman to cut it, the second, called "*täkkul koŋ gurrupän*", lit. "axe hand give", is to pay the craftsman by presenting him with a steel axe, which, after he has used it to cut the canoe, becomes his own property.

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[26] There is some tendency to assume that these wooden canoes were once manufactured with stone axes. Actually proof is not lacking of the fact that the *lippa lippa* (wooden dugout canoe) was part of the culture complex introduced by the visitors from Indonesia and that these canoes were never made in Australia until after the introduction of the iron axe. (This, however, does not apply to the seagoing dugout outrigger canoes of Eastern Cape York Peninsula, North Queensland, which were made with native shell adzes, but which had a separate origin.)

4.

CRAFT SPECIALISATION

463 In most parts of Australia, the material culture is relatively simple, and each individual makes for himself most of the weapons and implements that he uses in his daily life. This is generally the case in Arnhem Land, and a man makes his own spears, spear-throwers, and most of the other equipment that he needs for hunting and fighting. But frequently he admires the handiwork of others who show special skill in technique. This is particularly the case with spears, in which it is of some importance to a man to believe that his weapons are superior or that they have some special (431) quality. He often acquires spears from relatives in the particular quarter within the exchange cycle which may be renowned for such weapons, giving in exchange, spears which he himself has made and which may have special merit in the eyes of people in the territories through which they pass.[28]

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411 [28] The distribution and the use of various types of spears is not as simple as might at first appear. Both in Arnhem Land and on Cape York Peninsula, North Queensland, the serrated spines of the stingray are used for the tipping of spears. On Cape York Peninsula these nails or spines are regarded merely as material for the tipping or barbing of fighting weapons and may be used by
411 anyone. But in Eastern Arnhem Land stingray spines are associated in
614 mythology with *Bulmändji* (Tiger Shark), a culture hero of
● 773 certain clans claiming *Bulmändji* as a clan ancestor, and the right

Not every man is skilled in weaving *bäti* (baskets), of 285
which many types are recognised, each with its own name 463
and each made for a specific purpose. A man with special skill in weaving becomes known, but he is called merely *ḳoŋ mainmäḳ*, a "good hand". Such a man may acquire some local renown and receive substantial payments (*baḳa bäḳmärämma*) in return for his work, but again, this is a tribute to, and an acknowledgement of, the *marr* of the master craftsman, the prestige he brings, rather than "payment" for his activities, his craftsmanship. But it shows the beginnings of the recognition of craft specialisation, the *virtu* of special skill in craftsmanship.

But in the case of the *lippa lippa*, the wooden dugout 501
canoes, which may exceed 24 feet in length and may be 396
capable of carrying upwards of six to eight men on sailing

to use these stingray spines is the prerogative of these clans only 411
and is jealously guarded. 614
773 ●

Again, the fine appearance and balance of a spear is not always 411
a gauge of its worth. I once remarked to an informant, Raiwälla, of 435
a spear shaft, that it was crooked and twisted, and the spear not of much value. But he corrected me quickly and pointed out that as the shaft was crooked the spear was not "flash" and was therefore more likely to fly straight to its mark. Such a remark is enlightening, because it stresses at once the great difference in the way in which the white man and the Arnhemlander look at even so simple an artefact as a spear. To the white man, a wooden shaft is of good or indifferent craftsmanship, but the native attributes personality to it. Its very appearance may be deceptive. It may possess *marr* from its background and association. For this reason a native may place great value upon spears received within the ceremonial exchange cycle, from areas renowned for weapons of a certain type, although to the eye of the white man they may appear to be
inferior to those which he makes for himself. The native recognises [554]
the prestige (the *marr*) of the master craftsman. By their associations certain *gerri* possess *marr*, and they have therefore a vastly enhanced *psychological* value as fighting or hunting weapons.

159 the English Company Island, people who still remembered how to do it
[501] (pages 459-460). Some of the people came out to our boat by lying on a
large log and paddling with their hands and feet. I got in the dinghy and
went ashore with some of the people on the boat. When my mari saw me
[152] he cried and cried. Some people are like that among us black men. We cry
when we meet people just as we cry sometimes when we tell them goodbye.
I tried to talk to him, but I couldn't say anything. It was just the same as
if I had lost my language. I had to talk to him in the sign language. I felt
very foolish. I brought flour with me, but they did not know what it was.
[252] They cooked flour in paper bark just like they did palm tree flour.

[609] All the people were very angry with the white man for keeping me away
so long, and some of them sneaked out in the bush and got their spears
and clubs and were going to kill the white man. I said no, that it was no
good. I said, "The white men talk very hard and sometimes they swear at
you, but inside they are all right. Sometimes when they swear, they mean
[439] good." While we were there I got my people to make gifts of turtle shell
and pearl to the white man, and he gave them hatchets and knives and
calico. I got in the boat and started to go back to Port Darwin with the
white man. Cape Don Tommy and the white man quarreled when we got
to Croker Island because Cape Don Tommy wanted to sleep on shore.
We got out at Croker Island and went by canoe to Cape Don. There I met
that girl again, but her husband was there then. We went on to Port
Darwin for a moon and came back to Elcho Island. Once more I went
into the bush and stayed.

His Wives and Their Parents

159 Black men walk about single and by themselves. At first they have no
581 mates. By and by they find one that belongs to them. By and by children
828 come. White men walk about by themselves. By and by they find a woman,
825 and more children come out. The Macassar man was all the same.

Big old man kangaroo walks about single and by himself. By and by he catches his woman, and then there are little kangaroos. Opossum and fly and bandicoot—they are all the same.

Python catches his mate and by and by there are eggs, then there are children. Frilled-neck lizard, native companion, honeybees, pigeon, hawk-billed turtle, and all those animals—they are just the same.

Black men cut down trees and by and by little ones come up. Everywhere
and all the time it is always the same. Walk around single, by and by a
159 mate, and by and by children. There is an inside meaning to this. Some of
581 us old men who are not fools understand. If those two Wawilak creator
828 sisters had not done wrong in their own country and fornicated with those
773
825

Wongar men, things would have been different. Both the men and the 159
women were Dua. They were incestuous. It was like a brother and sister 581
being together. Those two sisters left that country, one pregnant and the 828
other menstruating. If they had not done this, this cycle would never have 773
happened. Everyone and all plants and animals would have stayed single. 825
But after the Wawilak sisters had done this they made it the law for everyone (pages 250-251).

When I was a small boy I walked about single. One day my gawel came to 159
me and said, "Look at me. I am your gawel. You must give me kangaroo 431
and turtle and spears. By and by I will give you my gatu mielk" (pages [582]
93-98). 583

I gave him spears and spear-throwers, hair belts, and all kinds of food because he would give me his daughters. When I first started making presents to him for my wife, my younger brothers all helped me. By and by, when they get ready to have a wife, I shall help them make presents to their gawels. My gawel gave my father presents of spears and food, and he also gave my arndi presents because I was her son and because she is my gawel's sister.

We like our wives' fathers very much. Suppose my gawel and my father 159
quarrel and suppose they fight. I can do nothing. I cannot help my father. 606
I cannot help my father-in-law. I must do nothing. They are all the same to me. I must try to stop any fight.

All men try to get plenty of wakus in other countries. This is because 159
they send presents to their gawels. They send things that aren't in this 431
country. This country, where we are now, has no stone. Relatives here 604
send presents to the Ritarngo country for stone spear heads. They send 606
bamboo to the Goyder River people for it. Some others have no white clay and they send to other countries for it. Fathers-in-law and sons-in-law are the people who do this (pages 95-96).

Sometimes a no-good gawel promises his daughter to three wakus. All 159
these "half" sons-in-law give presents to him. They all think they are going 578
to get that girl. By and by one gets her. This means a big row. The other 604
two want to fight this lucky one, and they always fight the father of the girl because he has been two-faced. They think this gawel maybe is a little bit crazy. Sometimes two or three boys, when they are all trying to get a girl, see that her father is no good and they all quit.

When a man marries a woman his father-in-law tells him to take good 159
care of her. When a man has two daughters from his father-in-law, some- 584
times the old man comes and says to him, "It is better that I give your younger brother this next girl." The older brother says, "Yes, you tell him

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152 cannibalism which they regarded as indispensable to a
186 hunter in order to maintain his prowess at a level that
266 could earn for him the coveted title of *tjambait*.

During much of the time—amounting to several years—
123 that I lived in Arnhem Land I hunted with groups of the status of horde, which often claimed one or more *marrngitmirri*. I frequently saw these men practising their cult, and was able to make a detailed study of both *marrngitmirri* and *kalka* while I lived a nomadic life with these people.

Kalka *and* Marrngit

754 The cult of the *ragalk* or *kalka—kalk'* of the Burara—, to which I have referred, is believed to be used to bring about the death of a man who has been made a scapegoat—frequently by a rite of augury—for the death of a member of an enemy horde. Often the victim will be a man against whom the deceased or his group have harboured a grievance of long standing, perhaps because he has failed to honour
[688 some payment such as that obligatory to one who has been
689] present at a *ngarra*—or clan totem—ceremony, to make a ceremonial presentation of *ngata*, food (really vegetable food), or of *gerri*, goods, valuables, to the elders of this clan. Of this obligation they say 'to pay back that *marr*'—to
[776 propitiate the *malli* of the culture hero whose totem is in-
782] volved. This *ngata* and the *gerri* presented by men who have attended the *ngarra* by invitation, are dedicated to the *wangarr* and are said to be *yarkomirri*, *i.e.* sacramental. Failure to discharge the obligation to make expiatory payments of the kind that I have mentioned places a man in danger of death by magic, even after a long period of time.

761 In Arnhem Land the belief is held that the death of any
754 person in full possession of his social personality is due, not to what the white man terms 'natural causes' but to the act of an enemy, often a person who is believed to bear a grudge, real or imaginary, against the deceased. Even death from sickness or drowning, from attack by shark or crocodile, and especially from snake bite, is not regarded as the primary cause, but merely the agent used by an enemy, or by a *ragalk* whose aid he has enlisted, to bring this about. The only exception to the belief about natural death is extreme old age, when, in the words of one of my informants, the people say 'time belong him now'—his time is spent, he has lived his life. Certain types of swellings
[688 and deformities are believed to result from ritual visitation
or punishment by the *wangarr*, the totemic ancestors, for
776 the violation, even accidental or inadvertent, of a tabu,
784 particularly on the eating of foods which are prohibited at
certain critical stages in a man or woman's relation to his
753] family or horde, as at initiation, on the death of near kin, or during pregnancy. Boils of a type distinguished as *marlung* are believed to be due to ritual punishment and so held as proof of the violation of a tabu, usually on the eating of food that is *duyu* (tabu) at critical stages in a man's life.

753 A man in east Arnhem Land named Nyarrang pointed
776 to a large tumour on his neck and told me that it was due to the *malli birlma*—*i.e.* a blow from the 'shade' or spirit of
● 773 an implement called *birlma*—used today as a mallet or hammer in food-preparation by women, and 'found'

[p.99(B)]

753
776 originally by the Djangauwo sisters—women culture
●[773] heroes, who, in their progress across east Arnhem Land,
thrust their yam sticks into the ground as they walked.
From each of the holes caused in this way there gushed a
spring of water of a special kind called *milmindjarrk*.
Certain tabus restrict the drinking of *milmindjarrk* water
and my informant Nyarrang declared that the swelling on
his neck was due to ritual punishment in the form of a
blow from the *malli* of the heavy *birlma*, used by the
Djangauwo sisters whose spirits still preside over *milmind-*
jarrk waters. Some time later, the effect of the blow from
the *malli birlma* had become manifest in the form of a
swelling. It is characteristic of these people that when
'something is wrong,' when they receive a warning in the
[787] form of an omen or portent, or when 'bad luck' attends
their hunting or fishing expeditions, they look back over
their lives for some incident which has caused them
[152] uneasiness or concern and which they feel may have
incurred the displeasure of the *malli wangarr*, the spirits of
the ancestral culture heroes.

756 The role of the *marrngitmirri* is twofold: first, to diagnose
sickness or to determine the cause of death, and secondly
[776] to find a scapegoat by the aid of his *marrngit*—who, being
spirits or ghosts, possess occult powers, powers to see
[787] things not visible to mortals, which they communicate to
the *marrngitmirri*, who in turn passes the information to the
kin of the victim. As a rule the verdict of the *marrngitmirri*
[682 is accepted without question and the people proceed to
593] select an avenger. This will be a person within the kinship
horizon of the deceased—sometimes a younger brother but
often a more distant relation from a clan to which, under
an extension of the kinship structure, he has special
obligations, which may be reciprocal.

In the marginal area adjacent to the Burara, *i.e.* close to
the territorial stronghold of the *ragalk*—the *marrngitmirri*
[754] looks at once for signs of the tell-tale magic of the dreaded
kalka, just as a man does when seeking the reason for what
he accepts as ritual punishment.

754 Even in the culturally homogeneous area of north-east
756 Arnhem Land, the beliefs and ideas about the *marrngit* and
114 *marrngitmirri*, as well as about *ragalk*, vary considerably—
necessarily so, in a matter which is strongly subjective. The
foregoing reference to the role of the *marrngitmirri* discounts
Webb's statement (*loc. cit.*) that this man 'possesses no
special influence in the life of his horde or tribe.' It must be
apparent that at critical times, when the sentiments of the
[753 kin of a sick or newly deceased man are aroused as they
761] are by the pronouncements of the *marrngitmirri* (which,
backed by belief in his *marrngit*, are accepted without
question), his influence on the horde in which he lives is
one of life and death.

The Kalka *at Work*

754 The *kalka* or sorcerer is believed to be responsible for
753 bringing about the sickness and ultimate death of his
761 victim but he does not profess to diagnose sickness or
injury due to magic, which is the role only of the *marrngit*.
In practice, *kalka* may operate singly but more generally
they work in groups of two or three. A sorcerer is likely

15: Chaseling OI 17 Murngin

●773

/Information on Murngin mythology will be found in category 116, pp. 128-156/.

YULENGOR

262 Lagoons overflow in the wet season and hundreds of acres
[133] of low-lying land are under water. It is country where water-
lilies grow in profusion. Women dive for the root-stocks
[222] and roast great quantities of them. Lily seed-pods are eaten
[252] raw, sieved through network dilly-bags, or ground between
stones and baked into cakes.

The most palatable of all vegetable food is probably the
corm or swamp rush, 'rarkai', and these swamps are famous
[137] throughout Arnhem Land. Rarkai rushes cover brackish
[222] swamps near the coast, and women systematically turn over
many acres of black mud in their search for the nut. In east
Arnhem Land I know of several such swamps, each of which
[361] supported a hundred or even two hundred Yulengor for six
[796] weeks at a time. During the corm season the hordes make the
swamps a rendezvous for corroborees, ceremonies, and initia-
[574] tions. Corms are about the size of marbles, and in addition
to being the most nutritious of all their vegetable foods they
possess a pleasant nutty flavour.

[771] Several foods have totemic significance and find a place
in ceremonial practices. Probably the most important of
these is 'ngutu', the nut of the cycad palm, and it is said that
this yellowish brown nut was first eaten by spirit-Ancestors,
[773] who instructed their daughters in the art of preparing it.
[462] Legend declares that as the knowledge was received first by
[222] women, they have for all time to attend to the gathering
and cooking of all vegetable foods.

262 Hard-shelled cycad nuts are cracked between stones, and
252 the kernels soaked in water for three or even five days. Most
of the poison is thus leached out, and the pulp is wrapped in
bark and buried in hot sand over which a fire is lit. Cycad
meal can be baked into flat coarse cakes that sometimes
weigh up to fifteen pounds, that keep for days, and can be
carried long distances for use at ceremonial gatherings.
[574] 'Ngutu' has sustaining properties, and Yulengor live on it
for weeks as they prepare for inter-tribal corroborees.

YULENGOR

262 Variety in this otherwise uninteresting vegetable diet is
provided by fish, birds, reptiles, and small animals. Women
[462] fossick in jungles for land-snails and large white wood-grubs,
[226] and when the tide is out they comb the mud flats and reefs
[222] for mangrove worms, shellfish, oysters, lobsters, and crabs.

231 Some women train dingoes to help in their ceaseless search
for small animals, reptiles, birds, and eggs. A dingo pup,
captured in the bush, henceforth shares the family shelter,
travels in the canoe, and is fed and petted with the children.
They are often called 'son' by the owner and referred to by
the relationship term used for the owner or his child. When
[766] a favoured dog dies, it is buried and wept over in much the
same way as a child. Women gash their heads and wail, one
of the men conducts a mourning-song and dance, and I
have seen them switch themselves with leafy twigs to drive
off the canine ghost!

Dingoes breed freely with domesticated dogs, and most of
the wild dogs in Arnhem Land now bear unmistakable
traces of the white man's dog. However, the pure-bred dingo
is by no means extinct, and there are many of these large,
strong, good-looking brown dogs in Arnhem Land. When
they are well fed (they seldom are), they grow to almost
twice the size of a kelpie and are attractive in appearance,
but they cannot bark. It seems certain that the dingo
[174] migrated with the first aborigines, and Dr F. Wood-Jones,
an authority on the dingo, says: 'The dingo and the Stone
Age dog of Europe are practically identical and both but
little removed from the Palearctic wolf stock from which
they sprang. Man and dog were both migrants.'

773 Several Yulengor legends referred to the creation of dingoes by aboriginal Ancestors. In one story, it was said that having already formed the nuclei of several hordes, the Ancestors came to the grassy plains south of Arnhem Bay, where they made a magpie, an opossum, and two dingoes. Summer showers drove the birds into a tree, where they

made a shelter out of leaves, the opossums into a hollow tree, 773
and the dogs into long grass which they scratched into a heap and crawled beneath. And this has been the way of their kind ever since. Heavy rains later flooded the plain and approached the dogs' shelter, so one of them suggested that they leave for higher ground, but the bitch said: 'I cannot go, I am about to pup.' When the young dingoes were old enough to fend for themselves, they were sent off in pairs to Yulengor hordes, and the old ones crossed the hills to Port Bradshaw. Here the bitch suggested that they should make a canoe and sail away, but the dog took her into the hills where they and their kind have roamed ever since.

Toward the close of the dry season, swamps begin to dry 226
and the fish to retreat to deep holes. It is the fishing season, and the hunter turns fisherman. Poison is made from the pulp of a fruit, which is sprinkled over the water, till the fish rise gasping to the surface. I noticed that Yulengor distributing the pulp shaded their eyes for protection against the fumes. Another poison was introduced by spreading crushed bark which turns the water black and some hours later causes the fish to float to the surface. Simplest of all methods, however, is to drag the heads of pandanus palms through the pool to stir up the mud and so suffocate the fish.

We were camped on the edge of one of the low scrub-covered coastal plains one morning during the King tides, when there was much running and shouting in the camp, as old men, women, and children left for the swamp where shallow water-holes had been flooded overnight and now held many small fish. Everyone brought bundles of dry grass to one end of the pond and threw them into a line from one side to the other. Next the hunters entered the water and slowly pushed the grass barrier to the far end of the pond. About forty pounds of small fish were gradually forced into shallow water and thrown out on the bank, amidst shouting and splashing.

CHAPTER NINE

Hordes at Home and at War

616 773 AN aboriginal myth says that tribal and social laws were made by spirit-Ancestors. Spirit-Ancestors wandered through the country begetting the first aboriginal children and instructing them in secret ceremonies, sacred songs, and dances. These first-born nomads were divided by the Ancestors into two great Dua and Yiritja moieties, and today a Dua man can marry only a Yiritja woman, or vice versa, and all children belong to the father's moiety.

616 624 This rule applies through the family to the numerous small hordes, for the horde is an enlarged patriarchal family in which the men and their children are members of one of the moieties, and wives and mothers belong to the other. Unmarried adult daughters and sisters are unknown in any [589] horde, for they are bestowed in childhood to become wives in hordes of the opposite moiety.

617 582 Each moiety includes four marriage-groups or subsections; the total of eight forms the framework of a marriage and social system. To obtain a wife, a man theoretically considers whether he is Dua or Yiritja; a Dua man invariably marries a Yiritja woman. The problem is further complicated in that he, being Dua, belongs to one of the four Dua marriage-sections and therefore not only marries a Yiritja woman, but a woman who must be from one of its four marriage-subsections, although marriage into a specified second section is allowed. Children of this union take the father's Dua moiety, though they will not belong to his marriage-subsection, nor yet to the mother's, but to another indirectly determined by the mother's.

murulkurr' (referring to wives' mothers' brothers), and 601 'nguti walkurr' (wives' mothers' mothers' brothers). In all I traced over one hundred different relationships, of which only about one-third had English equivalents. Fortunately for us, modern society does not recognize the remainder, for some of them are involved and interminable—such as 'mumulkurr', who may be wives' maternal grandmothers, or grandmother's brothers' wives, or maternal uncles' wives' mothers.

There are several groups of loosely knit hordes in Arnhem 619 Land. In the west from Cape Don to the Liverpool River, thirty hordes are associated in common society, each speaking similar dialects, but, as a social group, having no intercourse other than that of a warlike nature with adjacent horde-groups. Again, immediately east of Cape Stewart, and extending to Blue Mud Bay, two hundred and fifty miles away, is the group of thirty-six hordes amongst whom I spent most of my time. A peculiarity of these large independent groups is that they are nameless, though occasionally reference may be made to 'island people' or 'mountain folk'. Yulengor from the Murungga Island horde are frequently called 'Murrnggin'. Hordes in the Gulf country call those in the west 'Meerwaitj', which means 'Where the sun goes down', and the Meerwaitj vaguely refer to the eastern Yulengor as 'Wornba' or 'Where the sun gets up'. These are only vague local references; the social group as a whole is nameless.

Throughout Arnhem Land many sacred trees, wells, 773 778 creeks, springs, reefs, and peculiar rocks, were visited by the creative Ancestors, and here they performed important acts and instructed their children in their lore. Yams and digging-sticks, used first by the Ancestors, are linked to a [779] totemic well where the earliest nomads were taught to dig for food, and at another creek the pandanus palm umbrella mat, 'Ngunmurra', was first introduced.

361 mainland to hunt for turtle eggs, the island is deserted.

I saw hordes behind Boucaut Bay practising a form of
266 cannibalism and eating their dead. A wealth of tradition
773 lies behind this custom, which originated with the eating of
[764] their tribal Ancestress. This prehistoric giantess came from the west and finished her labours at Boucaut Bay, where she made a plain and a swamp full of vegetable food and fish. Near by she bore children and established the local hordes. Many years later the Goddess died and left the horde the problem of disposing of her body. She had been an active Goddess, and the hordes had depended on her, and now, as they had no desire to lose the prestige she had given them, they retained her strength by eating her body.

The precedent of the Goddess is advanced as the reason for continuing the custom of eating dead relatives and enemies killed in battle. All hair is scraped off and burnt,
266 intestines are removed and buried, and the head is severed
764 from the trunk. Meanwhile relatives prepare an oven
[262] by digging a trench, lining it with stones, and lighting a fire on top. When the tempo of singing and dancing has increased to fever-pitch, the skull is pierced and the brain removed, wrapped in bark, and given to the mother to guard. The skull is cooked, separately cleaned, painted, and hoarded. Removing the bones is a lengthy process and must be done carefully so as not to sever the limbs. All bones are exposed in a tree to bleach before being painted and hoarded till it is convenient to pack them in a burial-post.

When the stones in the trench are hot, the coals are scraped away, and a relative grasps the hands of the now boneless and headless body, drapes it over his shoulders and dances among the chanting, wailing horde. It is lowered into the trench-oven, covered with bark and sand and allowed to cook to the accompaniment of singing and
[533] dancing. Most chants relate to the departing spirit, and in

776 power behind totem centres, and human spirits created and
775 received again in Buralkor by him after death.

It soon becomes obvious that to arrive at an understanding
771 of the nomad, and to win his complete confidence, there
773 must be an appreciation of his religion. His religion runs down through his secret life to everyday arts and crafts, which were all given him by the Junkgowa and determines even his methods of food-gathering and cooking. All these things are done in a particular manner, because the Junkgowa so instituted them. In the network of the nomad's life the simplest of activities are linked to his highest beliefs and noblest aspirations. They stand or fall together, and no part of his habits and customs can be tampered with without the risk of doing violence to the entire structure of his life and culture. An effective approach to the nomad can be made only on the basis of religion; that is, by an appreciation of his habits, outlook, and philosophy of life. Be a man trader, adventurer, or missionary, he will find a ready welcome if he is prepared to respect their laws, both common and sacred, which are all interwoven and rest on ancient Junkgowa creation myths.

Several old men were talking together and invited me to
177 join them. One of them said: 'We like those stories of Jesus
797 that you tell us: He is the white man's Junkgowa. Our Junkgowa came from Wangarr and we can see now that, in the same way, Jesus is the white man's Junkgowa.' It was instantly clear that they accepted Jesus as the equal of their Junkgowa—and no more. If such an estimate were accepted it would preclude any development in their outlook, aspiration, and custom. I suggested to these primitive philosophers that many Junkgowa had taught the white man, although they went by the name of 'prophets'. Second, their teachings were incomplete and vague till God the Eternal Spirit, known to aborigines as Wangarr, sent His Son Jesus to complete the revelation. Because of the